

Qigong:

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Lose Weight, Get Fit and Get Healthy With Chinese Qigong An Introduction

Chapter one: Introduction:

Chi Kung is an ancient Chinese method of using simple stances and, or, movement combined with specific breathing techniques to help the body to regain a natural internal balance. Modern medicine now recognises the need for this internal balance in such things as our immune system and the balance between internal organs. However, the Chinese took the idea of internal balance to far greater areas of healing by discovering that each organ in the body had to either have a negative or positive polarity with reference to each other. They also discovered that certain pairs of organs were inextricably linked in what they called yin and yang pairs. So if for instance the Heart was affected, they would look for an imbalance between the Heart and the Small Intestine as that is a balanced pair. When the balance between those two organs was restored, the patient was well on the way to recovery. They didn't stop there however; they would then diagnose what other parts of the body were out of balance and also restore that area.

Losing Weight and keeping fit:

In order for the physical body to also be in perfect balance and thereby maintaining an ideal weight for each body type, internal balance is essential. The mind, spirit and body are inextricably linked. So what one does, has a direct effect upon the other. People who are obese are also out of balance in mind and the levels of yin and yang Qi (energy) in the body. So when we get the mind into balance so too does the body wish to be balanced. In this way losing weight comes naturally. All of the correct hormones are produced in harmony and balance to cause the body to lose weight (or gain weight if necessary). The essential hormone HGH (Human Growth Hormone) is produced in a greater quantity naturally, which is one of the best weight loss hormones in the body. And you do not have to take unnatural synthetic HGH which can have a deleterious effect upon the body and mind!

15 minutes every morning and evening will help you to lose weight and get fit and most importantly, healthy. There is a difference between being fit and being healthy. It is much better to be fit and healthy though. Even supreme athletes can die of heart attacks because they were fit but not healthy. So this is also a very important part of Chinese Qigong. It causes your body and mind to be fit AND healthy.

The main area of losing weight is what your mind is doing. So if your mind is out of balance so too will your body be out of balance. The first area that Qigong attacks in weight loss (balance), is to balance out the mind and the hormones that affect the mind. In this way you have a much better chance of losing weight and keeping it off as your mind is not continually fooling you into believing that you are hungry, or that you have to eat for comfort or emotional reasons.

Emotional:

This is another big area where Qigong is able to help. Every organ in the body controls a different emotion. When I was a child my Mother would always say that I had a ‘shitty’ liver if I was ever angry etc. But she did not know how correct she was. The liver/Gallbladder is the balanced pair of organs that controls depressed/anger while the Kidneys control fear. The Lungs with its balanced pair, the Colon, control grief/anguish while the balanced pair of Spleen/Stomach control worry and sympathy. The balanced pair of Heart/Spleen control the emotion of joy.

Excessive joy is a disease of an unbalanced Heart. Depression is a disease of the unbalanced Liver. Obsession is a disease of an unbalanced Spleen. Anguish is a disease of an unbalanced Lungs while ‘fear’ is a disease of an unbalanced Kidneys. See Chart below.

Depression	Is a disease of the	Liver
Excessive Joy	Is a disease of the	heart
Obsession	Is a disease of the	Spleen
Anguish	Is a disease of the	Lungs
Fear	Is a disease of the	Kidneys

So many patients have come to our clinic with one of these emotional problems. They cannot see that their problem is emotional because their mind is out of balance. However, once we begin them on a regime of Qigong and diet, they begin to see things clearer and do not know why they did not see it before! Once the mind is healed, it is always easy to heal the body and to keep it healthy.

Qigong comes in many different ways of exercise with breathing methods. Each is designed to either have an over-all effect upon one’s mental and physical state or to attack a specific organ or group of organs. Once diagnosed, the treatment is simple. Qigong exercises along with a simple diet.

However, it is also possible to treat oneself using Qigong methods. For this we have the more general Qigong exercises, ones that do not require any great physical ability or intervention by a ‘Qigong Doctor’. It is these Qigong methods that I will be presenting in this book.

Our body is divided up into areas of yin and yang (balance). So the upper parts of the body are relatively Yin (negative, female, dark, cold), while the lower parts are relatively Yang. (Positive, male, light, warm). The left side of the male body is Yin, while the right is relatively Yang while the reverse is true for women. That is not to say that the negative is at all bad as one would assume in the West, as both Yin and Yang have equal value in Chinese Medicine and must be in a constant state of balance in order for the body to be healthy.

We can have an out of balance state that is not too great, thus giving us a slight headache for instance, something that will usually right itself given enough time for the body to re-balance naturally. Or we can have a greatly out of balance state where we have some dire disease that requires a doctor’s attention or even surgery etc.

It is of the utmost importance that we try to maintain this state of balance both externally and internally in order to have a healthy and long life.

Within every animal there are six balanced pairs of organs and their associated acupuncture meridians or channels. These meridians can be likened to arteries and veins; only meridians carry a life-force called Qi (Ch'i) (pronounced 'chee') or Electrical energy. If you move, you must use energy and this energy (Qi) must come from somewhere to cause that action to happen. It is this feature that the Chinese discovered, that enables us to use the movement therapies to great benefit.

The Chinese call the holding area for the Qi, the 'Tantien', an electrical space about 3 inches below the navel in humans and situated upon an acupuncture meridian called the 'Jing Mei' ('Mei' being another name for meridian or channel) which is in the centre of the body running from head to sexual organs. This holding area is often also simply called the kidneys. And in Chinese medicine, the kidneys hold a special place of honour because it is the 'Kidney Qi' that is the main source of energy in the body.

So the Chinese doctors found that in order for instance to simply lift a hand, Qi was required. And it came from this holding place immediately down to a point on the base of the foot called the 'bubbling well' point or Kidney Point No. 1. **(Photo No.)** This point is the main point in the body as far as energy is concerned. All energy must firstly go down to the KD 1 point in order to be routed all over the body to allow the various muscles to do any work. The Qi, then, had to move through a channel or meridian to get to the final muscle that had to do this specific work. So for instance if the 'work' was to push something using a single palm and you just happen to have your left foot forward and pushing with your right palm, then the Qi would have to be routed through the 'Heart' Meridian thus bathing the heart in life-giving Qi. This is also apparent in the Martial/Healing art of Tai Chi (Taijiquan) whereby we make use of this Qi flow directed by certain work. So the group of postures called 'Brush Knee and Twist Step' do exactly the above in that you are pushing something with one hand. However, as most things in China are based in some way upon the martial arts, they gave us a martial arts movement to affect this type of healing. So instead of closing a door, for instance, you are attacking someone with one palm while brushing away his initial attack.

The same theory applies to all of the 12 main internal organs and associated meridians.

So if some genius were to then find a way of moving in a certain pattern that would include every movement that would cause the Qi to be routed through ALL of the internal organs, then this would surely be a way to great health!

And this is what they did of course when they discovered firstly Qigong and then later, Tai Chi. In fact, Tai Chi is called a moving Qigong. *(See my book published by Carlton Books, London on Basic Tai Chi.)*

'Movement' does not have to be an exercise whereby we have to go somewhere or move something physically. It can also mean that we are standing still but using muscle power which of course requires energy. So if we were for instance simply standing still with our legs bend, this would still have the effect of routing the Qi all over the body for healing as the legs would be creating heat and thus needing energy.

They then took movement a step further and discovered that certain static postures where the patient would have to stand in a certain manner and hold certain hand and arm postures, would also cause this great Qi healing. They discovered that when we light a fire we require energy, and after the fire is lit, it produces its own energy. The static Qigong stances that they invented caused the body to 'light a fire' in the Tantien area which caused the Qi to have to be routed to all parts of the body and the fuel for this fire was air or breathing in a certain way.

So now we have an exercise or 'non-exercise' that almost anyone can perform in some way or another depending upon how ill they are. And it was discovered that this form of Chi Kung was also beneficial in stopping disease before it started by simply keeping the body in a

constant state of balance. It treated the whole body and not just the immediate disease or ailment or part of the body that was affected.

Long before we in the West discovered the great healing benefits of exercise, the Chinese had taken the movement therapies to great heights by combining set patterns of movement with specific breathing methods.

For thousands of years, Chinese Doctors had been treating patients for all kinds of physical and mental ailments using an ancient healing method called Chi Kung. (Also spelled, Qigong, Ch=i Kung, and Ch=i Gung).

Chi Kung is based upon Traditional Chinese Medicine and many believe that Traditional Chinese Medicine is actually based upon Chi Kung. There is evidence to suggest that Chi Kung came first and because of the knowledge gained from this therapy, we gained the knowledge of acupuncture and the various energy (Qi) flows in the body.

Nowadays much scientific research has been done to substantiate the effectiveness of this healing art, mainly in China where they still lead the world in this type of therapy. I have included an article from a Chinese newspaper about some of this research.

Qigong

An Article from Science and Medicine Magazine in China.

By Wu Xiaoming

Professor Feng Lida, deputy director of the Navy General Hospital in Beijing, believes that a Qigong doctor is different from a Qigong Master in that the former needs a knowledge of Western Medicine science to help him treat patients more effectively.

Feng, 62, who has been researching the immunization effect of traditional Chinese deep breathing therapy from a Western medical point of view, will deliver a report on her findings at the first international symposium on the medical uses of Qigong, which opens today in Beijing.

Born into the family of a prominent general, Feng studied at the Medical School of Huaxi University in Chengdu, the Department of Biology of the University of CA at Berkeley in the USA and the Leningrad Medical College in the Soviet Union, where she studied immunology and obtained an associate doctorate degree.

While in Leningrad, (now St Petersburg), she realized that existing treatment methods for diphtheria were ineffective because they did not improve the patient's immunity. She then began to treat patients with acupuncture with good results. Feng began her research on Qigong's immunizing effects in 1979, after hearing some patients say they were cured through Qigong.

In the summer of 1981, Feng and her assistants conducted experiments on the effect of Qigong on colon bacilli, the bacteria often used in medical experiments because of their strong resistance to treatment. They held a test tube containing bacilli and projected Qi, or vital energy on them for a minute. Microscopic photos showed that 44 to nearly 90 percent of the bacilli were destroyed – they swelled, broke or dissolved.

Similar experiments revealed that Qi also kills 66.7 to 98.9 per cent of treated dysentery bacilli and destroys flu bacteria.

Interestingly, Qigong can either destroy bacteria or help the proliferate, depending upon what kind of Qi a doctor directs on them.

Feng believes that after training by a Qigong doctor, a patient can activate the Qi within his or her body to help kill bacilli and cure an ailment.

A Qigong doctor's concentration influences the effect, a report by Feng's research group says, adding that bionic research and an instrument to measure the quantity and quality of Qi are needed to monitor Qi emissions.

Feng and her assistants have also conducted experiments on Qigong's effect on cancer cells. Western medical treatment including surgery, radioactive and chemical therapies, often lower the immunity of the human body while killing cancer cells.

Feng hopes to find new ways to treat cancer that avoid this problem.

In another series of experiments different doctors treated cervical cancer cells with Qigong for 20 minutes. Results showed that a third to two thirds of the treated cancer cells were killed. In experiments in which stomach cancer cells were treated with Qi for 60 minutes, a quarter were destroyed. Microscopic photos revealed that both the surface and nucleus of these cells were destroyed and that the chromosome structure of these cells had been altered. Similar experiments were later conducted at other hospitals in Beijing and the results were similar. Feng said.

Chinese scientists have found that Qi emissions are in fact a radiation filed mixed with infrared radiation, magnetic radiation, electrostatic charge and corpuscular streams. And foreign scientists have discovered that there are many places on the human body where the emission of these energies is strongest, and these spots are located close to the acupuncture points of traditional Chinese Medicine.

From June to December 1987, more than 200 cancer patients were treated with Qigong at the Navy Hospital. Two-thirds of them enjoyed a greater appetite and less pain and some were in higher spirits.

IN June of last year, an 80-year old man who had been diagnosed as suffering from advanced cancer of the esophagus went to the hospital for treatment. He could eat a little, was emaciated and spoke feebly.

A month-long Qigong treatment improved his ability to sleep and eat. X-ray and other examinations also indicated that his condition greatly improved.

In October 1986, a young Japanese was discovered to have a brain tumor 5 centimeters in diameter. Japanese doctors predicted that he could live only for another year or two, that surgery was impossible and that radioactive therapy would not help. The young man almost lost his eyesight and the left corner of his mouth was twisted. Feng, who was invited to Japan, treated him with Qigong in addition to Western and other traditional Chinese therapies. Before long, the young man's eyes began to move and his sight started recovering. His mouth almost reassumed its former shape.

Feng believes that Qigong has enormous potential as an advanced branch of treatment. "Our knowledge of the human body is still limited", she said. "Qigong will help us".

Foot Note: The above also depends greatly upon the state of mind that the patient is in when receiving the treatment. Many Western people have not responded to this kind of treatment simply because they believe that it will not work! It's a shame that we in the west have come to this condition of only believing in Western medicine and only trying TCM when all else has failed and when obviously it is then too late!

I remember being called in to treat a very rich business tycoon in Sydney with Qigong therapy. When I arrived, he was almost dead and in an oxygen tent! He died one day after!

Chapter Two: What Is Qi

The 5 Element Points Cycle of creation or SHENG Cycle

See Diagram No. W 1

The SHENG / Creation or Nourishing Cycle is where each element nourishes or creates the next cycle (element) e.g. Fire creates Earth. The sequence can be rationalised as follows

WOOD creates FIRE (the wood is burnt to create the fire). FIRE creates EARTH (Fire expends it's self and what is left is ashes which become Earth).

EARTH creates METAL (the element Metal is found by digging in the Earth)

METAL creates WATER (by melting-- solid metals melt to form a liquid). Metal also corresponds to AIR (in Western astrology) and air condenses to form a liquid.

WATER creates WOOD (by nourishing growth)

If each element is fed and strengthened it will feed the next element in the cycle like a mother feeds a son or daughter, thus it is termed the cycle of creation and it gives birth to the Mother / son theory used in treatment of disharmonies.

The KO / inhibiting / repressive or controlling cycle is where each element inhibits or controls the element two steps ahead in the sequence e.g.. WOOD controls EARTH. This is like a Grandparent exerting control over a Grandchild, in T.C.M. called Grandmother / Grandson cycle. It works as follows---

FIRE controls METAL (by melting it).

METAL controls WOOD (by cutting it).

WOOD controls EARTH (by covering it).

EARTH controls WATER (by damming it).

WATER controls FIRE by extinguishing it).

DIAGRAM NO. W 2

Organ element relationship.

ST = STOMACH, HT = HEART, LV = LIVER, BL = BLADDER, KD = KIDNEYS, CO = COLON OR LARGE INTESTINE, PC = PERICARDIUM, TH = TRIPLE HEATER, LU = LUNGS, SP = SPLEEN, SI = SMALL INTESTINE, GB = GALL BLADDER.

<i>ELEMENT</i>	<i>STATE</i>	<i>ORGAN</i>	<i>STATE</i>	<i>ORGAN</i>
EARTH	YANG	ST	YIN	SP
METAL	YANG	CO	YIN	LU
WATER	YANG	BL	YIN	KD
WOOD	YANG	GB	YIN	LV
FIRE	YANG	SI & TH	YIN	HT & PC

The harmonious balance of the SHENG and KO cycles represents the mutual support and control of the 5 elements. The SHENG (creative) Cycle ensures that there is continual growth and generation.

The KO Cycle ensures that there is growth within limits, that growth does not continue unchecked. Thus the two cycles represent the balance of the 5 elements. Both cycles are natural and positive, unless an imbalance or blockage occurs in the flow resulting in the generation of a destructive cycle. The SHENG Cycle is predominant during the day and the KO Cycle is predominant during the night. Each element has its corresponding colour, smell, body organ / channel, etc. that can form the basis of diagnosis. If any concordance tends to predominate or is lacking, a practitioner will be able to diagnose which part of the sequence is disturbed and treat the energies accordingly to open the natural flows.

Another way of using this system is as follows:

An inflammatory condition occurring in an organ or tissue can be seen as a FIRE type symptom (feels hot and will cause irritation, etc.) so using the WATER Pt to reduce this FIRE (inflammation) can have a dramatic and immediate effect on the inflammation. If the inflammation is not completely relieved by the WATER PT then add a METAL PT to nourish the WATER and increase the affect of the action of WATER.

As a Martial Artist one could do a primary strike on the EARTH Pt of the Pericardium Channel and then do the next strike on the Front MU Pt of the HEART (PC 7 & CV 14), to increase the damaging effect of the strike to the HEART MU Pt. This is using the SHENG Cycle's Mother Son theory where the Son is used to drain QI from the Mother. The HEART is the YIN or half the YIN of the Fire element (PERICARDIUM is the other half of the YIN of the Fire element. The PERICARDIUM is also seen as the protector of the HEART so damage here could increase damage to the HEART. Using an example from the KO cycle, one could strike to the Metal Pt of the PERICARDIUM Channel (PC 5), then follow with a strike to Front MU Pt of the LIVER (LIV 14). Here Metal is acting to control the Wood and the further strike to a major Pt affecting the YIN organ of the YIN Element adds insult to injury and results in dramatic results (perhaps LIVER shut down). These are just examples of how these cycles might be used martially; there are lots of different combinations that could be used.

There is also a cycle called the reverse KO Cycle (or counteracting or rebellious cycle), this is where one element rebels against its natural controller. This is an abnormal cycle and is a symbolic of defiance. The format follows -----

Wood counteracts Metal (by blunting it).

Metal counteracts Fire (by extinguishing it--cutting off its supply of oxygen)

Fire counteracts Water (by boiling it away if the Fire is too vigorous).

Water counteracts Earth (by washing it away if the Water is dammed to excess).

Earth counteracts Wood (by providing no foundation for its roots).

It may well be that at death the reverse KO cycle comes into play.

Healing is the art of building / moving and balancing the body's QI while Martial Arts is the art of stagnating, depleting and scattering the body's QI.

If you are going to learn to destroy then also learn to build.

Transferring and Issuing Qi

Qi is electricity in one form or another. We are affected by electricity every day of our lives. Even when we did not rely upon electricity for our daily needs, we still lived in a constant and natural electrical environment of around 40,000 volts so I am told by the experts. I know this to be true from experience. I once worked in a large building in London, one of my many jobs that I had to do to survive. Whenever I entered this building, I noticed that my heart rate increased dramatically as did my blood pressure. I could not understand why this was so. Therefore, I began investigating as discovered that this particular building was built with much iron reinforcement around each building compartment. Apparently because of the

damage done in the war. Having received some electrical training as part of one of my occupations, I knew that this iron shielding would shield people from our natural electrical environment. I had to leave this particular job because my health was suffering, as was the health of many of those also working in the building.

We all work on electricity, we communicate using it, we affect the way others perceive us using electricity and we are affected by other's electrical forces. This is qi in daily life. We naturally issue qi to others as part of our daily lives; we transfer our own qi to other people every second that we live. However, this is a sub-conscious event, something that we have no control over, as our heart beat or digestion or other internal workings. We in the martial arts and healing arts would like to have some control over the transference of qi in order to heal or to defend ourselves using something other than purely physical force. And we can.

You cannot knock anyone down using qi from a distance but you can affect the way someone else's qi works, so much so that you can cause them to fall down or become well etc.

However, you must actually touch the person in order for this to happen. The electrical system of our body is a very low voltage, something that we need very sensitive instruments even to pick up. Things like heart measuring devices actually measure electrical activity in the heart; it is the same for the brain etc. So when we are issuing qi, we are issuing minute amounts of electricity (qi) and we need to be either touching the person's skin or so very close to it so that this small electrical current is able to work. Anyone who knows anything about electricity knows that if you place another voltage or current near or on top of a current or voltage, you will affect that electricity in some way. Moreover, this is what we do when we issue and transfer qi. We are able to either issue qi that is sympathetic to the other person's qi thus helping to heal that person of some disease state, or we are able to affect that person's qi adversely as in the case of the martial arts and self defence. It has been said that the greatest healing that one person can give to another is simply to touch that person. And this is so true, as you are not just touching; you are issuing qi every time you simply touch someone. Quite often, this is enough to heal simple illnesses without any special training or concentration of qi. In the case of a practitioner whose job it is to heal people, or a martial artist whose job it is to protect people or to teach others to protect themselves from physical attack, we must learn how to concentrate the qi and then to direct it. However, this direction and concentration must never be a physical conscious act, as all physical thought will cause blockages. So you see some so called healers placing their hands upon others, saying some chanting or some noise or quite obviously trying to physically direct their qi into the sick person. This will not work as they are trying to do it and this will only block the qi. This is where Qigong comes in.

With Qigong and taijiquan and all of the internal martial arts, we have ways to direct and concentrate the qi without actually doing anything, or more importantly, not having to think about doing this. All we have to do is the training, that is all.

The backbone gives you your first inkling as to how qi is transmitted or issued.

The Chinese word 'Sung' (relax) is one of the most important aspects of Qigong. Actually, to 'relax' is not a good translation and is actually quite wrong. However, there is no translation for 'sung', it requires a sentence or two to describe this word. When we go into a state of 'sung' every muscle, sinew, bone and joint in the body is connected rather than when tension is present and every part of the body is a separate identity. Therefore, when one part of the body moves, it will cause the whole body to move. This is especially true of the vertebra where there is a special significance for qi transference and issuing of qi. You must become aware of every vertebra in your backbone, every sinew in your body, every muscle. Then you must take those into a state of sung using what is known as 'Qigong'. Another way to describe 'sung' as told to me by one of my teachers is as follows: You take your cake out of the oven and it has risen nicely. You place the cake onto the table and look around to get a

knife to cut it and when you look back, it has flopped. So you did not see the cake flopping, it moved without your seeing it. Sung means that we must move or stand motionless without feeling.

‘Sung’ is the first area of Qigong that one must learn. Sung is a way of compressing every vertebra in the backbone, and eventually every part of the body, connecting together every minute part of the body so that the stored power of every cell is able to be used as a whole. Like if you have only a few grains of gunpowder, it does not have much effect when ignited. However, if you have millions of grains of gunpowder, the effect of the whole lot being ignited is far greater. It is the same with our qi. If we only issue the qi force from one part of the body, like the arm or leg, we only have access to the power from one portion of the body. Because we have to use much more physical power (muscle power tension), we actually in turn block the flow of what little qi we are trying to use. So we not only do not have much power, we also waste our own power and become tired easily.

We must learn connectivity at a very base physical level before we can learn it at an energy level. For this, I have a simple training method that I have found to be helpful to my own students.

Stand opposite your partner and place your right palm onto his or her left shoulder. (Photo No.81). If I tell you to push his shoulder to your left, most people in the beginning will push as in (Photo No.82). Doing it this way you are only using shoulder power and blocking your own energy. You will find that it takes a great amount of energy to get your partner moving and even then, he only moves a short distance. All of the qi is blocked at your shoulder. You must think about your waist and then join that power to your right arm. Use the power in your waist (which is quite considerable) to move your partner. Say to yourself that when your waist moves, so too will your arm because it is connected to your waist. Whatever your waist does, so too will your right arm. You must have all of your centres aligned though. So, turn your body so that your right wrist is in line with your centre. Now, when you turn your waist, your right palm will move instantly. However, if you notice that your centre has slipped away from your wrist, then you are again using shoulder power only. Doing this exercise correctly, you will notice that you will now be using much less power (energy) and gaining a greater effect.

‘Sinking’ is a word that is used much in Qigong but that is little understood. This word is also to do with ‘sung’. It is relatively easy to sink the body, to have a feeling of sinking into the ground, but this is only part of ‘sinking’. To ‘sink’ means that we must also sink and join every bit of power held in the backbone so that we are able to issue it in healing.

The backbone is the place where the energy is stored; it is often called the tantien, an imaginary place 3 inches below the navel where the psychic centre of the body is supposed to be housed. I believe however that the tantien is the whole of the backbone. We are told that we have several ‘tantiens’ or psychic centres, and all are located along the backbone or along the centreline of the body. However, I believe that we have only one tantien and that is the spine. It is from the spine that we issue qi for healing. One of my teachers once told me that the spine and its vertebra was like having many cells (batteries) in the backbone and that we are able to join those cells to form a big battery to issue greater amounts of qi. Looking at the vertebra you can see that each one looks like a capacitor, with its two poles and electrolyte substance in between. We are told in Qigong that the backbone stores the qi and then issues it when needed. When we compress the backbone like as if the backbone is a chain inside of a plastic pipe and it cannot fall in a heap on the ground because of the pipe so each link of the chain gently falls down on top of each other and stays there, we link all of our vertebra together psychically. We link and join all of the individual powers of each vertebra causing a much greater whole. Once we have ‘joined’ each vertebra, the individual parts of the whole

body will then be joined and as we release the stored qi, the whole body releases its qi rather than just one part like a hand or arm, leg etc.

Chapter Three:

Meditation:

The road to real health begins with the mind. Many people start out with good intentions; perhaps the incentive is a heart attack, or something more basic like seeing themselves as they really are. Usually they go on a crash diet and embark on a heavy exercise programme. If they don't kill themselves by the time they have lost weight they are too sick to enjoy it. Usually the fad only lasts for a short while and the cravings come back with a vengeance. So the patient is sicker than before because of the shock the system has sustained.

The only tool we have to make us stick to our intentions is the mind. Unfortunately the mind is usually in the same condition as the rest of the system through bad eating habits, bad thinking habits (aggravated by bad eating habits) and bad exercise habits. We need something to heal the mind first so that the mind can heal the body.

The area that influences the mind is the way we live. Tension created by just living in the twentieth century is the greatest cause of ill health, and not many doctors realise this. We may be given a pill to ease the tension, but this does nothing to attack the cause of the tension and so the disease grows.

Around our bodies we have channels called meridians through which energy flows, something like the vessels through which the blood flows. All eastern philosophies of health talk of such a flow. The Indians talk of prana, the Japanese call it ki, the Chinese call it Qi, we call it electricity or life-force. The fact that it exists is not the question for most western scientists now know of such a force. What is not known is how to keep a plentiful supply and how to keep the channels open.

What is needed is some way to train the mind not to allow tension to affect us. Whether the tension is psychological or physical it has the same effect on the body's energy. If the body's energy flow is interrupted or slowed down our natural healing systems are unable to cope with normal external attacks.

Tension, more than anything else, affects the flow of Qi by closing the channels. Through the miracle of television cameras we can actually see the stomach contracting and unable to digest when the person is placed under stress or even thinks about being angry. The same things happen to the acupuncture meridians; they contract, allowing only a small amount of Qi to flow to all parts of the body. This can be used to great advantage by a trained martial artist; it is possible to strike certain parts of the body when the most Qi is flowing through that area, to cause immediate great tension, thus closing the meridian. After some time, perhaps days, the meridian slowly closes completely and the recipient of the blow dies. This is sometimes called the delayed death touch or dim-mak. However, it is said that this practice takes around three lifetimes to learn so not many ever come to such a level.

There is a small gland at the base of the neck running to the sternum. It is called the thymus gland, and in Chinese medicine is said to control the flow of Qi as well as its physical function of producing anti-bodies. The first gland to be affected by stress is the thymus. The energy system of the body is affected immediately and if left unchecked will lead to the destruction of the body's energy system.

We do gain some relief from stress through sleep, but most of us counteract the benefit by sleeping on soft mattresses and watching television and eating before retiring. We need sleep to recharge our batteries; if we are using energy for digestion or for processing thoughts, we aren't using it to recharge.

If we can find a way to stop stress from affecting us we are on the way to defeating the main cause of disease. We need to develop a calm mind, not always an easy thing to do. Meditation is completely foreign to most westerners, but Chinese exercises do not seem so strange because we are using the body to gain a mind effect.

Levels of meditation

There are three levels of meditation we can practice using movement. There is another, which requires no movement and is common to most forms of Indian yoga. This is where we sit cross-legged and meditate on a mantra or an object. Most westerners find this quite difficult, and can sometimes fool themselves into thinking that they are meditating. Moving meditation, although involving learning certain patterns of movement, can be easier because it does not use mind games. All we have to do is to learn and practice the movements in the correct way and the meditation will happen by itself; the mind will relax, the body will relax and as the body relaxes so too does the mind, and so on.

The first level of moving or working meditation is where we stand in a certain position with slightly bent knees. This is the work part of the meditation. The bent knees provide the heat necessary for certain chemical or energy changes to take place. It is not too difficult to maintain this sort of meditation but it is a little more physically difficult than the sitting kind. We are trying to teach the mind to relax while working. In this way we do not need a nice quiet room with candles in order to relax. We are teaching the mind to relax at all times so that tension does not build up.

The basic stance for this kind of meditation (Qi kung or Qigong) is seen in photograph 1. The legs are slightly bent with the knees not projecting any further than the toes. The toes are turned under a little, but not enough to make them turn white. The arms are held at chest height with the fingers pointing to each other. The fingers are held slightly apart with the palms concave. The tongue is pressed lightly onto the hard palate with the chin pulled in slightly to straighten the back. The eyes are looking straight ahead but not staring. The shoulders are relaxed with the elbows hanging. The breath is deep but natural and not forced, breathing in through the nose and out through the nose.

This posture is held for at least 15 minutes but beginners can start with 5 minutes. Older people can practice this meditation sitting in a chair as seen in photograph 2. Photos No. 1, 2 & 3

The second type of meditation is where we start to move while still holding the same relaxed meditative state induced by the Qigong. The slow, natural movements of T'ai chi chuan lend themselves to meditation, as there are no fast or jerking movements. The whole set is made up of different postures linked together by circling movements. One is able to keep a relaxed calm mind while performing the T'ai Chi form which lasts up to one hour.

The movements relax the mind, this causes our movements to become more relaxed and smooth which in turn helps the mind to relax even more, so the mind and body help each other up the ladder

The third area of meditation is where we learn to perform more normal tasks while still holding the meditation. Tai chi has another form of exercise called pauchui form, or cannon fist form, and as the name suggests this has some fast and hard movements. This form teaches us to keep our meditation even when confronted with the worst tension out in the street. In practising this form while relaxed we are able to walk out into the big world knowing that nothing will upset us or make us tense. See photograph 3.

Chapter Four

Qigong

An Article from Science and Medicine Magazine in China.

By Wu Xiaoming

Professor Feng Lida, deputy director of the Navy General Hospital in Beijing, believes that a Qigong doctor is different from a Qigong Master in that the former needs a knowledge of Western Medicine science to help him treat patients more effectively.

Feng, 62, who has been researching the immunization effect of traditional Chinese deep breathing therapy from a Western medical point of view, will deliver a report on her findings at the first international symposium on the medical uses of Qigong, which opens today in Beijing.

Born into the family of a prominent general, Feng studied at the Medical School of Huaxi University in Chengdu, the Department of Biology of the University of CA at Berkeley in the USA and the Leningrad Medical College in the Soviet Union, where she studied immunology and obtained an associate doctorate degree.

While in Leningrad, (now St Petersburg), she realized that existing treatment methods for diphtheria were ineffective because they did not improve the patient's immunity. She then began to treat patients with acupuncture with good results. Feng began her research on Qigong's immunizing effects in 1979, after hearing some patients say they were cured through Qigong.

In the summer of 1981, Feng and her assistants conducted experiments on the effect of Qigong on colon bacilli, the bacteria often used in medical experiments because of their strong resistance to treatment. They held a test tube containing bacilli and projected Qi, or vital energy on them for a minute. Microscopic photos showed that 44 to nearly 90 percent of the bacilli were destroyed – they swelled, broke or dissolved.

Similar experiments revealed that Qi also kills 66.7 to 98.9 per cent of treated dysentery bacilli and destroys flu bacteria.

Interestingly, Qigong can either destroy bacteria or help them proliferate, depending upon what kind of Qi a doctor directs on them.

Feng believes that after training by a Qigong doctor, a patient can activate the Qi within his or her body to help kill bacilli and cure an ailment.

A Qigong doctor's concentration influences the effect, a report by Feng's research group says, adding that bionic research and an instrument to measure the quantity and quality of Qi are needed to monitor Qi emissions.

Feng and her assistants have also conducted experiments on Qigong's effect on cancer cells. Western medical treatment including surgery, radioactive and chemical therapies, often lower the immunity of the human body while killing cancer cells.

Feng hopes to find new ways to treat cancer that avoid this problem.

In another series of experiments different doctors treated cervical cancer cells with Qigong for 20 minutes. Results showed that a third to two thirds of the treated cancer cells were killed. In experiments in which stomach cancer cells were treated with Qi for 60 minutes, a quarter were destroyed. Microscopic photos revealed that both the surface and nucleus of these cells were destroyed and that the chromosome structure of these cells had been altered. Similar experiments were later conducted at other hospitals in Beijing and the results were similar. Feng said.

Chinese scientists have found that Qi emissions are in fact a radiation field mixed with infrared radiation, magnetic radiation, electrostatic charge and corpuscular streams. And foreign scientists have discovered that there are many places on the human body where the emission of these energies is strongest, and these spots are located close to the acupuncture points of traditional Chinese Medicine.

From June to December 1987, more than 200 cancer patients were treated with Qigong at the Navy Hospital. Two-thirds of them enjoyed a greater appetite and less pain and some were in higher spirits.

IN June of last year, an 80-year old man who had been diagnosed as suffering from advanced cancer of the esophagus went to the hospital for treatment. He could eat a little, was emaciated and spoke feebly.

A month-long Qigong treatment improved his ability to sleep and eat. X-ray and other examinations also indicated that his condition greatly improved.

In October 1986, a young Japanese was discovered to have a brain tumor 5 centimeters in diameter. Japanese doctors predicted that he could live only for another year or two, that surgery was impossible and that radioactive therapy would not help. The young man almost lost his eyesight and the left corner of his mouth was twisted. Feng, who was invited to Japan, treated him with Qigong in addition to Western and other traditional Chinese therapies. Before long, the young man's eyes began to move and his sight started recovering. His mouth almost reassumed its former shape.

Feng believes that Qigong has enormous potential as an advanced branch of treatment. "Our knowledge of the human body is still limited", she said. "Qigong will help us".

Foot Note: The above also depends greatly upon the state of mind that the patient is in when receiving the treatment. Many Western people have not responded to this kind of treatment simply because they believe that it will not work! It's a shame that we in the west have come to this condition of only believing in Western medicine and only trying TCM when all else has failed and when obviously it is then too late!

I remember being called in to treat a very rich business tycoon in Sydney with Qigong therapy. When I arrived, he was almost dead and in an oxygen tent! He died one day after!

Qigong, or chi kung, translated means breath work or breathing exercises and we can use it to build up our internal energy or Qi. We need an adequate supply of Qi to each organ to maintain good health, but just as important is the free flow of this energy through the meridians.

In China there are Qigong clinics where people can go to be treated with Qigong either by a doctor or as a self help exercise. The patient learns the Qigong exercises so that self-healing takes place and this is obviously the best way. If however the patient is in no fit state to perform the exercises, then he must first be treated externally. This involves the doctor putting in his own Qi into the affected part or into the whole body.

If we are to heal ourselves we need a normal flow of Qi, but if we are to heal others we need an extra amount of Qi. This means that we ourselves must be fit and healthy, and apart from building up an extra supply of Qi, we must also learn how to put it into others. This is a very simple practice physically but is quite difficult to learn mentally.

In order to heal others with Qi we must know the meaning of yin and yang and how to cause different parts of the body to become yin or yang by using the mind. Once this is known, usually after many years of practising an internal art such as T'ai chi chuan or Taoist yoga, we then have to build up our supply of Qi and learn how to get it into another person. A Chinese doctor confronted with a mild disease will stand in a Qigong posture for around 10 minutes to build up his immediate supply of Qi. When he knows that he has enough to give he will either place one palm onto the affected area, use point massage, acupuncture or tui na (Chinese massage). All of these healing arts make use of putting the Qi in. The first method uses a point called pericardium 8, near the centre of the palm. This is the healing point and is where the Qi is able to escape and enter another either for the purpose of healing or in the

martial arts. Point massage uses acupuncture points, pressing the relevant ones with the fingers and putting the Qi in. Acupuncture also uses this putting in of Qi via very fine needles. The acupuncture point is activated by the needle and then the doctor puts the Qi in via the conductor. This is a more effective way of getting the Qi in as the electrical resistance of the skin is overcome. Tui na is a massaging technique that makes use of points and squeezing, manipulating techniques.

If someone has to be treated for a major ailment the doctor will fast or only eat fruit for 10 days and practice Qigong three times each day for at least 20 minutes each time. Only in this way will the doctor's body and mind be strong and clean enough to perform the difficult healing session. A great amount of energy is also needed for this session, hence the long Qigong.

Sometimes western students of Chinese healing methods only look at the physical effect of the particular practice i.e. they only study the technique of needling or the technique of massage. But if no Qi is present then all of that learning is wasted. Some form of internal art must also be practised in order to gain the idea of Qi. Qigong is the starting point for this learning.

History and origin of Qigong

The Qi part (or Qi) of Qigong means air or inner vital energy. Translated into western medical terms it means resistance to disease, adaptability to the external environment and the ability to overcome internal troubles and regain health. In Chinese medicine for thousands of years great importance has been placed upon exercises that strengthen the vital energy.

Traditionally any exercise that dealt with breathing and internal methods was considered to be Qigong. Nowadays we tend to call the more static breathing techniques Qigong and the moving exercises by their specific names.

The content of Qigong is varied but it mainly involves the regulation of the structure (posture), regulation of the mind, regulation of the respiration, self-massage and movement of the body.

The earliest records of Qigong come from the jin wen (writings on bronzes) from the Zhou dynasty (ca. 1100 C 221 BC). During the Warring States period (770 C 221 BC) Qigong developed as never before and many great thinkers emerged. In the *Book of Changes* or *I jing*, semen, internal energy and the mind were considered to be the treasures of the body. An exercise akin to Qigong called Daoyin was popular at this time. An inscription on a relic found in the Warring States period read, Take a deep breath and sink it to tantien (a point about 3 below the navel). Hold it there for a while and then exhale it as sprouting grass until it reaches the top of your head. This causes the Yang energy to rise and the Yin energy to drop. Those whose Yang and Yin energy goes its own way will live, otherwise you will die. This saying was part of the daoyin exercise and holds true for all Qigong nowadays including T'ai chi, pa-kua, Taoist yoga and all of the internal arts.

Found at the No. 3 Tomb excavations at Mawangdui in Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province, were many medical treatises and books on daoyin dating to the Western Han dynasty (206 BC C AD 24). Among these relics were pieces of silk onto which had been painted figures of men and women, young and old performing daoyin exercises. 44 pieces of silk were found. Some figures imitated the movements of the bear, ape, tiger, deer and bird which are now called Wuquinxi or the five animal forms. All of these physical movements were combined with breathing techniques. Next to one of the figures were the words, Look skyward and exhale.

The earliest and most famous book on medicine comes from the Warring States period and is called *Huang Di Neijing (The Yellow Emperors Manual of internal Medicine)*. From this book we read, One must breathe the essence of life, regulate ones respiration to preserve ones

spirit and keep the muscles relaxed This sums up the art of T'ai chi chuan in a nutshell. In another part of the book we are told how to perform this exercise. Stand facing the South in the early morning and inhale seven times without thinking about anything. This also depicts our Qigong perfectly.

In the Southern and Northern Dynasties (AD 420 C 589) an Indian monk came to China to set up the Zen practices in the now famous Shaolin Monastery. He was said to be called Ta-Mo or Bodhidharma. He evolved a set of exercises combining his Qigong and Chinese wushu. This later became the basis for all of our martial arts.

Qigong was widely spread from the Han Dynasty (206 BC C AD 220) to the Tang Dynasty (AD 618 C 907). It was used widely in medical treatments; one famous doctor called Cao Yuanfang of the Sui Dynasty (AD 581 C 618) said that when someone had mastered Qigong, they were able to release through their palms a sort of vital energy, which could heal others. By the Song Dynasty (AD 960 C 1279), some Confucian students who had failed their Imperial examinations turned to the medical profession. However they placed too much emphasis on the Classical theoretical studies and neglected their practical studies. (This still happens today; many acupuncturists have excellent theory but no Qi). As a result of this neglect, Qigong declined and was only practised among the folk doctors. Fortunately research was carried on in the religious circles and Qigong was integrated with wushu. However, the same thing happens today; Qigong is too hard for many wushu (martial arts) practitioners to understand, so they neglect their Qigong, or are never even aware of it.

From the Wong to the Qing dynasties (AD 960 C 1911), Qigong was used in connection with mysticism and many people shrugged it off as superstition. But since the turn of this century there has been a resurgence of interest and Qigong has been researched in the light of modern science. Many of the exercises which did result from superstition have been tested and discarded, but others have been retained e.g. the Eight Golden Treasures, also known by many other names.

In China today Qigong clinics have been set up to study and teach Qigong and to treat disease. Modern instruments have been used to detect infrared electromagnetic waves, and magnetic information coming from the palms of Qigong masters who are using this internal energy to treat such diseases as high blood pressure, neurosis, functional disease, paralysis, cerebral concussion and tumours of the thyroid gland. It is sometimes used as an anaesthetic, although I'd want to be very sure it worked before it was used on me!

Healing yourself with Qigong

Qigong can be performed anywhere at any time and only takes around 15 minutes per session. At first you will need a quiet place where you are able to concentrate, but after some time you will be able to perform it in any environment, even on a bus or train if you don't mind people staring at you.

The postures

Three basic Qigong postures can be held C standing, sitting or lying down. The standing posture was described in Levels of meditation, see photograph 1. The sitting posture is much the same C sit on a chair with feet flat on the floor and the back straight. One of those old wooden kitchen chairs is ideal. Hold the palms in front as for the standing posture and vary the intensity by either moving the palms out for more effect or pulling them in if the exercise becomes too tiring. Clear the mind and concentrate on getting the breath down.

The lying position requires the same mind attitude as the others, but is good for the elderly and those in poor health. Lie on your bed or on the floor Hold your palms over your chest with fingers pointing towards each other as shown in photograph 4. You may vary the intensity by lifting your arms higher, or holding the palms further apart. A subconscious flow

of Qi should be felt in the palms i.e. as if the palms want to move themselves in and out with the breath. **Photos No. 4, 5 & 6**

Four different palm positions

The palms can be held in four positions. The main position is called The Mother Position and is the one seen in the photographs, with palms towards you. This position is a general health giver for the whole body and mind.

The second is its opposite, The Father Position where the palms face outwards & everything else is the same. This causes the Qi to flow into different muscles. This position is used when Yin sickness occurs i.e. where a person has not much energy, is too thin, out of condition from too much softness.

The third position is The Daughter Position where the palms face downwards as in photograph 5. This position is used to cure any arm, wrist or palm injuries, including arthritic complaints.

The fourth position is The Son Position and is seen in photograph 6. The palms are facing each other and bent slightly at the wrists, but not enough to cause tension. This position treats ailments of the upper back and arms.

Moving Qigong

Any movement that uses relaxed postures integrated with breathing techniques could technically be called Qigong. However there are certain exercises that also work on specific organs or in the treatment of certain diseases when combined with the breathing techniques.

The changing of the *sinews*, or triple warmer Qigong

This triple warmer exercise is said to balance the yin and yang energy of the body.

Stand in a normal position with feet relaxed, toes turned slightly outward. Breathe in through the nose and lift both palms up in front of you with the palms facing upwards. The fingers point towards each other as you stand up onto your toes. Older people may prefer not to stand on their toes. See photograph **7 & 8**.

As you breathe out, turn the palms downwards still with the fingers of each palm pointing towards each other and push downwards back to the starting point as you lower your heels. This must be done with very relaxed palms and shoulders. Make sure the shoulders do not lift up at any time. See photograph 8.

This first movement is called the Lower Warmer and acts upon the elimination organs, colon, kidneys, etc.

Repeat this exercise three times and then go on to the next part, called the Middle Warmer.

This exercise acts upon the digestive organs.

This time lift the palms in the same way as before, coming up onto the toes again. This is exactly the same as before.

Now as you breathe out, turn both palms outwards at chest height and push out away from your body. When you push out from your chest, the arms should be held at arms length but not quite straightened. Continue the push until the palms have reached the sides of your body. Continue the circular movement and push downward at both sides until the palms have come back to your hip level. Remember to stay relaxed. See photographs 9 and 10.

For the Upper Warmer, start the movement in the same way as for the other two by bringing the palms upwards and standing up on your toes. This time gently roll the palms up and over your head with the palms turned up. Hold your breath as you push upward. Photograph 11.

Next, take both palms out to either side and as you push down, breathe out and stand down.

Photo No. 12 This acts on the respiratory system and the mind.

Never eat before or after practising any Qigong for at least 10 minutes and preferably one hour as digestion uses up too much energy. The main areas of energy use are procreation (sex), digestion and physical or mind movement. So when practising any meditation we need the Qi to flow freely. If we use up the gained energy there is no sense in doing the exercise in the first place.

Exercise for the alleviation of the triple warmer

This exercise harmonises the three vital forces, respiration, digestion and reproduction. Link your fingers down near the tan-tien (3 below the navel). As you stand up in the same way as for the first triple warmer exercise, bring the palms up to chest height, this time a little closer to the chest. Photograph 14. Now push both palms up over your head as you look at the backs of the palms, which have been turned outwards. Hold this position for about 5 seconds and breathe out as the palms part and push down to either side.

Photos No. 14, 15, 16 & 17

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Harmonising yin and yang of stomach and spleen

This exercise works upon the stomach and spleen, which are linked in Chinese medicine. Lift the palms as before with the fingers almost touching and the palms in close to the chest as you breathe in. Now push one palm up over your head, palm up, and one down to your side, palm down. Hold this position for about 5 seconds while holding the breath and then breathe out as the upper palm comes down to the same level as the other. Repeat this on both sides. Photographs 15 and 16.

Prevention of tuberculosis

Turn your head as far as possible while breathing in. Don't strain. Hold this position for a count of 5 then turn back to the front while breathing out and repeat on the other side. Photograph 17 If any unusual amount of pain is felt in either shoulder as this is done, there could be something wrong with your small intestine.

To strengthen the kidneys

Bend down with knees straight, grab your big toes and lift them upwards as you breathe in. Hold this position for 5 seconds and breathe out as you stand up. Older people may bend the knees. This exercise acts upon the kidney meridian. **See photograph 18.** An alternative is to simply press the main kidney point called K1 on the sole of the foot just between the mounts of the big toe and second toe. Hold pressure for 7 seconds and stop, then repeat. Kidney 1 position is shown in **photograph 19.**

Qigong for sexual organs

This is a very powerful exercise and should be treated with a little caution. If you start feeling sick, stop and try again later. This is also helpful for menstrual disorders and helps with premature ejaculation.

Sit on a low chair or on the edge of a bed so that your feet are flat on the floor and your back straight. Cover your knees with your palms. Inhale through the nose while bending forward 45 degrees, keeping the back straight. Use the mind to feel a concentration of energy coming

up through the soles, along both legs to CV1, between the anus and the sexual organs. Now breathe in just a little more as you bend a further 10 degrees and direct the energy to the uterus or penis. Slowly breathe out as you sit up. As with many yogic exercises, a little sexual feeling may occur during practice, but this is quite natural.

For this exercise, lie on the ground with your arms by your sides and slowly relax every muscle. Inhale and imagine that the breath is coming in through your feet as you slowly lift your legs keeping the feet together. It is important not to use any more muscle than is necessary for the job. Just think about which muscles you need and keep the rest relaxed. Bring the feet up 45 degrees and hold until you start to shake a little, usually about 10 seconds. Now as you breathe out, imagine that the air is moving from the stomach back down and out of your feet, as you slowly lower your feet to the ground.

Qigong

The way that we learn how to connect each vertebra and eventually every cell in the body is in the practice of qigong. Qigong has become the new catch phrase of the 'new age' movement taking over almost from Taijiquan as the exercise we all practice in order to see God! Ten easy lessons and everyone is able to become a qigong expert. We now have 'flying duck qigong', 'sitting goose qigong', 'pooing bat qigong', etc. We have 20-year-old 'masters' of qigong charging huge amounts of money to teach this mystical practice. However, this is only the beginning point to learning about issuing qi.

Qigong is a relatively simply physical exercise combined with certain breathing methods. However, if the mind part is not correct, then you will never gain qigong. In addition, as with Taijiquan, qigong is difficult, it will always be difficult, no matter how hard or how long you train. If qigong is not difficult, then it is not qigong. The same goes for Taijiquan, it never gets easy. And this is where many drop off as they expect the training to become easy as they progress.

For a beginner, qigong is perhaps one of the most difficult things that he or she will ever have to do. However, if you persist, the gains will be immense. The hardest thing about basic qigong is that you have to do nothing! This is when all of the modern methods of qigong have come about. Modern qigong gives us something to do, some set of exercises to perform. However, qigong is not a physical exercise, it is a mind exercise. At an advanced stage, one is able to perform qigong while moving as in the practice of all of the internal martial arts. However, in the beginning we must simply stand there in a certain position doing nothing, no thought, only breathing. And this is the most difficult of all.

There are around 200 different types of qigong, but these are grouped into three different areas as follows.

The "Self Healing" area allows us to go into a state of 'sung' in order for our own qi to have a better chance of healing us. This is the first area that we learn, and it is the easiest.

The "Martial Qigong" gives us more power for the martial arts, for self defence. We gain the ability to issue qi using this area of qigong. Although all three areas will allow us to issue qi. We must however learn the self-healing area before going on to the martial or the next one.

The "Medical Qigong" will teach us to issue qi for the healing of others as in 'Medical Taijiquan' which will be the subject of a future volume of this series.

All qigongs within the different area of qigong all do the same things, so it is not necessary to learn every qigong there is available. We have many different types to enable each individual to choose the one that suits he or she best. I always give my students the basic "Three Circle Standing Qigong" as their first lesson as this is the foundation. This qigong is the King of qigongs and will teach you more about you and the issuing of qi than any other qigong.

Taijiquan is the top level of qigong; it is a moving qigong and is considered the best self-

healing qigong of them all. But it is very difficult for the beginner to take the movements of taijiquan to this qigong level as he or she is still thinking about where to put the hands and feet and simply to get the form correct. In the ensuing time, we have basic qigong to tide us over until we are able to take taijiquan to its highest levels. We practice basic qigong for at least the first six years of our training in taijiquan, and I still practice it every day after over 30 years of practice.

The Method

Stand as in (Photo No.83) & (Photo No.84). Your knees are bent so that they do not protrude beyond your toes. Remember though that in looking down, there is a parallax error, so you should actually see that your knees are a little further than your toes. Alternatively, to be sure, place a straight edge vertically, touching your large toe, your knee should also be touching the stick if it is vertical to the ground. The tailbone should be tucked under, but not forced. In fact it should naturally fall under when you are in a state of *sung*. The tailbone (sacrum) is that last area of the body that will become '*sung*' (relaxed), so you will probably have difficulty in attaining the vertical tailbone at this stage. Stand up against a wall, and see if you can push your hand through the lower back area. If you can, then you still have a way to go. Alternatively, lie down on the floor with your knees raised, like as if you are in the standing position.

You should be able to have your whole lower back flat on the floor. In fact, for older people or those convalescing, this is a regular qigong position, only with the hands in the particular position as in the above photos. You can also do this qigong sitting on a kitchen chair with a straight back.

The hands are held at about upper chest height, elbows hanging below the wrists as if hugging a tree. The palms are held slightly pointing away from you as if saying, "want something?" There should be a straight line of skin but not tensed between the thumb and forefinger. Move your thumb around and see that many lines of skin will appear, but only one line will appear in the correct position. The top of the edge of the forefingers should be held at about the height of just under your nose. Your fingers should be held in the "tile palm hand" position. I.e., the fingers are not held tense, but naturally layered, like the tiles on a roof. The small fingers should be slightly closer to you than for instance, the forefingers. The feet should be placed about shoulder width apart and the feet should be parallel on the inside of the feet. The chin should be pulled in lightly but not tense, while the eyes should look straight-ahead not staring. The tongue is placed onto the hard palate like saying the letter 'L'. This joins up the yang (*du mai*) and the yin (*ren mai*) meridians so that we will have a complete flow in the upper heavenly circulation.

The feet are slightly scrunched under so that the base of the foot is slightly concave. The toes should not go white; this is an indication that the toes are scrunched under too much. Also, do not roll the feet out onto their outsides. The reason for this is that when we concave the feet, this causes the bottom of the feet at a point called "Kidney One" (K 1) to become yin while the outsides of the feet are relatively yang. The qi is said to 'spring' from the 'bubbling well point', or K 1. All qi is held in the *tantien* and it must firstly get down to K 1 before we are able to use it for anything such as healing or for the martial arts. Hence making K 1 yin in order to attract its opposite, yang qi.

The breathing is done through the nose only in the qigong. However, there are times when we would wish to breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth and visa-versa. This is when we are for instance convalescing and wish to have a 'tonic breath'; we would in this case breathe in through the mouth and out through the nose. In the case of wishing to cleanse the body and mind, like when we are fasting for instance, we would breathe in through the

nose and out through the mouth. You should breathe naturally, not forcing the breath. Breathe deeply as far as you can without forcing. Hold the breath for a short time, about three seconds and then breathe out.

There are four types of breathing that we learn in qigong. These should be practised three years apart. I.e., you become at ease with the first, then go on to the next etc. The first breathing method is called the “natural breath”. This is as it says, natural, so that when you inhale, your abdomen below your diaphragm is expanded. In other words, your lungs fill with air. Do not at any time expand your upper chest, this indicates tension. In fact, you can inhale fully and still lift up your chest not taking in any more air. There is very little lung area in the upper chest; it is all down below the diaphragm. When you exhale, your lower abdomen should contract. This is natural breathing.

Tension will creep in without your even knowing it. So be aware and always on guard for this. Watch your upper chest, your neck in particular and shoulders, they will become tense, do not allow this to happen. Only use the correct amount of muscle power to hold your arms in that position and no more. Be aware of your whole body in fact. Begin at your head, and work your way down the whole body, relaxing each part. After some period of practice, this will become natural and automatic and all tension will be gone. Remember that tension is the killer of life! Tension, either physical or mental will cause qi blockages and so begin the downward trend to ill health. Many of today’s diseases can be traced back to tension in daily life, especially the mental variety. However, mental and physical go hand in hand, so if you begin to fix your physical tension, then the mental will soon follow.

The second breathing method is the “reverse breath”. This is when we inhale, the abdomen is contracted and when we exhale, it is expanded. This should not be attempted in the beginning, as it in itself will create tension. This kind of breathing done at the correct period in your training will enhance the qi flow and activation in your own body and allow you to be ready for qi issuing and transference.

The third type of breathing is called “pre-natal breath”. We have two areas of qi activation and flow in the abdomen. That which we use before we are born and which is given to us by our mothers, (pre-natal) and that which we gain for ourselves after we are born, (post natal). After we are born, we are in a human conscious state and we are using post-natal qi. However, our pre-natal qi is still there, giving us life force and must also be nurtured and used at a natural rate. If it is not (as in the case of most human beings), then we must get more qi from somewhere and add it to the pre-natal qi. There is a way to do this by taking some “outer qi” and adding to the “inner qi”. We use pre-natal and tortoise (the next type of breath) to do this.

When we breathe naturally or with reverse breathing, there are two flows of qi in the abdomen. When we breathe in for instance, there is a flow that begins at the diaphragm (the border between pre and post natal qi) in the back of the body and goes upwards if we use natural breathing in the upper part of the body. I.e., the upper part of the abdomen is expanded as we breathe in. Now, if we were to also use natural breathing with the lower abdomen, the qi flow would be the same, upwards from CV 1 (a point where three main acupuncture meridians meet between the anus and sex organs), to the diaphragm. Therefore, the activation points of both flows of qi will never meet. Both go up, both go down. However, if we now use reverse breathing where the upper abdomen is expanded on inhalation, and natural breathing in the lower abdomen upon inhalation, where the lower abdomen is drawn in, both activation points of each flow is now reversed. Therefore, when we breathe in, the lower qi activation point will now meet with the upper flow’s activation point. When we exhale, the lower qi flow (pre-natal) will take a little of the ‘external qi’ (gained from the air, food, water) with it to enhance the pre-natal qi. So the abdomen, when doing pre-natal qi breathing, looks like a kind of wave.

This is a difficult type of breathing to master and should not be attempted until the first two ways have been thoroughly mastered. You could get into difficulty to do so too early. So, please be warned!

The last type of breathing is called “tortoise breath”. It is the same as for pre-natal breathing; the only difference is that upon the inhalation, we hold that breath in, for a count of seven seconds. This simply mixes the inner and outer qi more thoroughly. There is no waiting or holding the breath upon the exhalation, only upon the inhalation.

Please note, that the above breathing methods of ‘reverse’, ‘pre-natal’ and ‘tortoise’ breathing can cause tension if done incorrectly or too soon in one’s training. Even now, after having trained since 1967, I always begin my qigong sessions with natural breathing and work my way up to the other methods.

You should hold the 3-circle qigong position with hands in the upper position for two thirds of the total time spent. So if you intend standing there for 15 minutes, then do 10 in the upper position, then move your palms downwards slowly, not losing the meditative state that you have gained, into the lower position. (Photo No.85). Hold this position for a further five minutes, then finish off by slowly raising your palms, (Photo No.86) while inhaling using natural breathing, bring them across to in front of you and push downwards as you exhale and straighten your legs.

Do not make any sudden movements after qigong, nor have anything cold to drink, do not even sit down, and just walk around slowly for about five minutes. You can be doing things while you do this though.

There are many different qigong positions, some very powerful, some that do nothing! I will not be giving those very powerful ones in this book, as I do not wish to be the cause of people getting into trouble mentally or physically. Those qigongs presented in this book are those that will give you a great amount of qi and also give you the tools to be able to issue and transfer qi without doing any harm what-so-ever to your mind or body.

Things to Look Out For While Performing Qigong

While standing in a qigong posture, you will experience a natural and mild shaking that begins in your legs and works up through your body. This is natural and should happen. I stress the word ‘mild’. Many make the big mistake in placing some weight onto the ball of the foot (K 1). This is incorrect as it causes something called ‘adverse cyclic qi’. This is when the body is unable to have a continuous flow of ground qi up through K 1 because of the tension placed onto K 1. The qi MUST flow up through the ground, so it builds up to such a degree that it bursts through the tension causing a violent shaking of the body in the form of a kind of waving movement. The body gyrates from side to side and up and down. This can cause brain damage as too much qi is being taken into the head area which will cause something akin to heat stroke. The heels are the areas for natural activation of K 1, so when weight is placed onto this area, it causes a natural enhancement of ground qi into the body. It is OK however, to place weight onto the balls of the feet for moments at a time as in the taijiquan form where we for instance, perform a spinning turn on the ball of the foot.

However, never any longer than 7 seconds.

The correct position of the weight during qigong is right in the centre of the foot near where the foot joins the leg at the front. So if you were to run a vertical line down from the crown, straight down to the ground, that point where the line hits the ground would be right in the centre of the foot just forward of the front of the ankle. It can be further back, but no further forward.

Be careful that the chin does not stick out; pull it in gently to 'raise the back'. One of the most important 'classic sayings' from the old masters is that we always keep a vertical backbone, never swaying from left to right or from front to rear.

Qi Transference Qigong

Several qigong methods are particularly good in developing qi issuing and transference. The best of these is one that I give to my students when they are ready for this phase in their training. It is simply called "qi giving qigong". This is one of those qigong methods that are of the 'martial' variety.

Stand with one foot slightly in front of the other with feet almost parallel but not quite. (Photo No.87). This is a one legged qigong, and although you will still have both feet on the ground, there is absolutely no weight placed upon the front foot, it is only there for balance. The arms are held so that they are relatively so, in the same positions as the feet. You should have a 'kua' or bridge under your arms; they are rounded with the wrists just hanging there, no tension.

When you inhale, your rear hand should slightly tense internally while the front palm is totally in a state of sung. Imagine that something is being drawn up into your left palm at a point called "laugung" or PC 8 (pericardium point No. 8). This is located in the centre of your palms where your longest finger touches the palm when you make a fist. As this happens, all your weight should be placed onto your rear heel. AS you exhale, you should move a slight amount of weight onto your front heel, no more than 20 percent though. Your rear palm now is in a state of sung totally as your front palm now tenses slightly. You should imagine that something is flowing out of your front palm at laugung into the ground. You should use a natural breath through your nose only. The tongue should be placed onto your upper palate. As you breathe in again, your total weight moves back onto your rear heel. So you will have a slight rocking back and forth as you inhale and exhale.

You must perform this until you feel the 'three signs'. There are three signs that we must look for when performing the one legged qigongs. Firstly you will feel like as if there is a red hot needle sticking into your thigh around the point called GB 31 (gall bladder point NO. 31). This is where your longest finger points to when your arm hangs by your side. Next, you will feel this heat dissipate around your thigh. The third feeling is that you will begin to shake mildly. Now it is time to change legs. If you do not feel the three signs, then you are not doing the qigong correctly. Perhaps you have not bent your knees enough. As I write this section of this book it is the middle of the night and I am listening to a Lyle Lovett album called Lyle Lovett, the song is "Simple Song". He sure writes some beautiful songs, and being an old rock and roller with several hit songs to my credit in the late sixties and early seventies, I know a good song! I go between playing guitar and writing; I HAVE to, to remain sane!

So, back to the book. Be careful to really listen and feel for the three signs otherwise you could do yourself damage.

Turn your front foot out by 45 degrees and step forward with your rear foot, which will now become your front foot. Inhale as your rear hand lifts upward as you step and crosses your other wrist. So both wrists are now crossed. (Photo No.88). Place your front foot into exactly the same position that your previous front foot was. You have inhaled. As you exhale violently though your mouth saying a fa-jing sound like "pah", you throw both of your arms downwards violently but not so much as to do damage! (Photo No.89). Allow your arms to naturally swing until they come to a stand still, raising your front palm into a position that is exactly the opposite of the previous posture. (Photo No.90). Now do exactly the same breathing and rocking as you did on the previous side and feel the three signs. You can do

this repeatedly but be sure to give each leg equal time. You will find that as the qi begins to move and activate, if you only could manage say, 3 minutes the first time, you will be able to do longer with you change legs as the qi is now moving freely. However, resist this temptation, only work with the three signs. Give each leg the same work out.

See the section on “how the mind works” further in this book as it will explain why it is important initially to use your imagination to get things happening. I give some simple exercises to get your imagination going to enhance everything you do from this series of books. In fact, all great martial arts make use of how the brain works in order to teach how to fight and to defend ourselves when we never really get the real practice at it. This is the reason that we have kata and forms in the martial arts.

This is one of the best qigong methods that I know of to enhance the issuing of qi. Combine it with the three circle standing qigong and you will reap the benefits in your healing and martial arts training. I have spoken to people in the body work industry who have tried these methods and they all say that their healing ability has increased dramatically.

I have a series of videotapes that cover the above qigong methods. The “Internal Gung-fu” series covers most of this. In addition, my tape MTG10 and MTG16 covers respectively, basic and advanced qigong methods.

Colour therapy and Qigong

Sometimes it is necessary to use a more potent form of Qigong when treating certain diseases. Colours seem to be able to direct the Qi to certain organs. Practice the Qigong exercises described earlier and place a large board of the relevant colour on the wall in front of you, and let this colour enter your mind as you practice. Sometimes in China they use colour rooms, and the patient is left to practise Qigong in a room of a colour pertinent to the organ being treated.

The position of your hands

If you have trouble with your lungs, place the two palms, still in the Qigong position, near the lungs. For the heart place the palms in front of your upper chest and a little closer than usual. For the kidneys, hold the backs of the palms about one inch over the kidney area at your lower back, etc.

The colours

White: Lungs and colon; to treat grief or sorrow

Green: Liver and gall bladder; to treat anger

Yellow: Stomach and spleen; to treat thoughtfulness and worry

Black: Kidneys and bladder; to treat fear

Red: Heart and intestine; to treat over joy

Tapping the thymus

A gorilla doesn't rap on his chest for nothing. In Chinese medicine the thymus gland, situated at the bottom of the neck and running towards the sternum in a tuber shape, is most important in the control of the flow of Qi.

Certain sounds are said to have an effect upon certain organs, and if we use these sounds in conjunction with the tapping then we are able to heal the controller of Qi.

Close your fists and rap on your chest lightly twice as you breathe in. Now as you throw both fists back as far as they will go in an explosive manner, say the sound HA. Be sure to have a light practice before to warm up the muscles, because the chest and back are stretched.

The sound HA strengthens the heart but the sound must come from the lower belly and really try to knock out the back wall with the sound. Try not to be around other people as they will think you quite mad.

Practise the same arm movements with all the other sounds, and make the sounds come from the lower belly:

The sound TSSSS strengthens the lungs.

The sound SHU strengthens the liver.

The sound FU strengthens the kidneys.

The sound HU strengthens the spleen.

The sound SHI strengthens the solar plexus.

Take this exercise easy at first and stretch the muscles before you start. If you are treating a particular organ that is damaged, repeat the sound 36 times. For general good health repeat only 5 times.

Tai chi

Tai chi is a moving Qigong. Each posture is said to send the Qi to various parts of the body in order of importance. Each movement is said to activate the twelve main acupuncture meridians and thus give the whole body a healthy workout. Tai chi is mainly preventive but will cure many diseases or body disorders over a long period of time. Usually I will either send a sick person to our acupuncturist or treat the ailment with a more specific Qigong exercise to have a more immediate effect. Then I give T'ai chi to stop the disease coming back.

In **photograph 20** the posture Single Whip is said to have an effect on the joints, arthritis, etc. while the posture White Crane Cools Wings in **photograph 21** is said to affect the central nervous system.

The way in which these postures work to heal the body is to cause the Qi to travel along certain acupuncture meridians to perform certain work. This work is to do with the martial art of T'ai chi.

If we imagine that we are performing certain martial techniques, for instance pushing someone over, and if we have understood the criteria for the practice of T'ai chi, the Qi or energy will flow along the meridians in order to reach its goal of pushing. Before the Qi has reached its goal it must pass through certain organs and is able to heal those organs as it passes. What we do is fool the mind into doing a task when there really isn't a task to be done. If we really had to push someone over then we would create tension in order to do it, and the Qi would be blocked. After many years of practice we learn to work and still have the Qi flow to all parts. This is because T'ai chi has a rather unique training method to teach us to perform tasks while still remaining relaxed. This exercise is called *toi-sau* or pushing hands. It involves two people using certain pushing and defending techniques to try and push without using brute force (tension) and to defend themselves without using tension. In this way the Qi is turned into *jing*, a sort of purified Qi which can be used for work.

For more information on T'ai chi and pushing hands see the list of books at the end.

Medical T'ai chi and Qigong

The T'ai chi doctor diagnoses in two ways C physical and mental, or external and internal. Mentally unbalanced attitudes usually manifest themselves in some physical ailment and if the practitioner is able to recognise these imbalances s/he is able to treat the physical disease, thereby treating the mental disease. On a very basic level, and keeping in mind that there are many variants in diagnosis of this kind, we have an imbalance of yin and yang. If a person is overly quiet and reticent, then there is usually a yang deficiency, whereas if the person is too outgoing and extrovert then there is a yin deficiency. Other mental disorders are caused by the same imbalance on a more sensitive level and must be treated with caution. Also, it must be remembered that certain people will seem to have a yin deficiency but in fact may be covering up for a yang deficiency, and vice versa. This can become evident in the way a person performs the T'ai chi movements. If for example a person is extremely extrovert and loud, but the movements are very small and close to the body, then they are probably using the extroversion to cover up introversion. Usually just learning the T'ai chi form will cure this condition, and after some time you will note that the movements become more open and well balanced and the mental condition improves.

Teaching a patient the T'ai chi form treats overall ailments and is used to balance the whole body internally and externally over a period of time. But sometimes a more direct approach is needed to cure a certain disease, so that the movements will become easier to learn. For this we must look at the physical way of diagnosis using T'ai chi and Qigong.

Physical diagnosis using T'ai chi and Qigong

Qigong is said to be able to bring a persons physical and mental situation into a state of balance, so we are able to use this to diagnose.

Observe the person in a Qigong position. If the palms are in the same place as they started after about five minutes, and every other part of the body is in the correct position, then just performing T'ai chi and Qigong will be enough to bring that person back to good health provided the diet is healthy. However if the palms move independently, or the shoulders or arms, etc., then there is something wrong.

For instance, if the left palm drops to a lower position and the patient is unaware of this, there may be a yang deficiency somewhere in the left-hand side of the body. If the left palm rises then there may be a yin deficiency. The deficiency could be in any of the organs on that side of the body. Sometimes if the ailment is not too far advanced, simply righting the palms, shoulders, elbows, etc. will cure the disease over a period of time, but if not then we must use the T'ai chi form to diagnose which organ the deficiency or abundance is in.

Remember that every posture from the T'ai chi form relates to a certain organ in the body, so we are able to use this for diagnosis. Using the above case, if a persons left palm keeps dropping during Qigong we know this indicates a yang deficiency somewhere on the left-hand side. We then look at all the postures which deal with the organs of the left hand side such as Grasping Birds Tail or Fair Lady Works at Shuttles etc. If the patient finds great difficulty in performing any one of these postures, and bearing in mind that most people find T'ai chi difficult at first, then the problem may lie in the organ that is related to that posture. If the extremely difficult posture is Grasping Birds Tail then this indicates a colon problem; if the posture is Fair Lady at Shuttles; a heart problem. My book *Power Tai Chi Ch'uan, No.1* covers most of the postures and their related organs.

Once the condition has been diagnosed we can then use the appropriate posture from the T'ai chi form as a Qigong stance to cure that organ.

It must be remembered that a patient in an advanced stage of illness cannot usually be cured with these methods, because it takes some time for the treatment to work. Firstly the patient must be well enough to perform Qigong and then the T'ai chi form, so in these cases the patient should be sent to a very good acupuncturist or to a western doctor who may have to

use the only means left C the knife. It is our job as therapeutic movement practitioners to stop the patient from getting ill in the first place.

The natural therapist looks at the person as a whole C diet, lifestyle, sexual habits, and in fact everything that the patient does from day to day. We must look at why the condition has come about and then work out ways to break the cycle so that the disease does not recur. It is not enough to put a Band-Aid on a bleeding finger C we must stop the patient continuing to cut the finger.

Pa-kua

Pa-kua chang is an ancient Chinese martial/healing art, and is much less widely known than its brother, T'ai chi ch'uan. Pa-kua, like T'ai chi can produce some amazing healing results. The exact origins of pa-kua are not known, but we do know that its basis is found in the Chinese *Book of Changes* or the *I Ching*. The *I Ching* is one of the oldest books from ancient Chinese culture and is used as a kind of bible C it is said to be able to predict the future and many people use it only as a book of prophesy.

The basic philosophy is one of softness overcoming hardness, and the use of the yielding principle instead of force on force, rather like the philosophy of a man called Jesus. Pa-kua is also based upon the Tao and once again we see the non-aggressive or yielding factor Taoism is a philosophy, which predates the more scientific Confucianism.

The *I-jing* is said to cover every possible change that occurs in nature and in pa-kua we also cover these changes within the various palm changes, thus bringing ourselves a little closer to the Universe.

Certain animal movements are copied during the practice of pa-kua and have immediate healing benefits on the body because of the way in which we twist and turn, activating every acupuncture meridian and exercising every muscle and tendon in the body

As with T'ai chi after some time of practice, we generate the internal energy called Qi and so every organ is bathed in life giving force.

Some of the pa-kua postures are shown in photographs 23 to 26. These postures can be used in a static position using natural breath, or within the context of the pa-kua form.

Chapter Five:

Chinese Self Massage

There are two ways of using Chinese methods of healing. The first and least common way makes use of the Qi by putting it into the patient, using acupuncture needles to reduce the skins resistance, point massage, etc. The second, more common way is to simply manipulate the various acupuncture points to cause them to activate. To heal ourselves we can either build up our Qi using Qigong, and cause the Qi to flow with T'ai chi or we can manipulate our own points. In self-massage we manipulate our points and stimulate the Qi we already have.

The method

There is a set routine starting from the head and moving down. Sit on the floor in a lotus or cross-legged position. The palms are held as shown in photograph 35; the eyes are slightly

closed with the tongue pressed lightly to the hard palate. The shoulders are relaxed and the back straight and vertical to the ground.

After a short time of meditation rub the palms together for about 10 seconds to create some heat. Then place the index and middle fingers of each hand onto the forehead as shown in photograph 36. Rub the fingers back and forth lightly all over the forehead for about 10 seconds, then take the palms back down to the knees in a circular movement and meditate again for about 10 seconds, breathing deeply but gently.

Next, rub the palms together again and place the same fingers over each eye and rub gently for 10 seconds, covering the whole closed eye and the eye socket. Take the palms back to the knees.

Rub the palms together again and take the same fingers up to the ears and rub the whole ear for about 10 seconds, including behind the ear and just down onto the jaw. Take the palms back down again and meditate.

Rub the palms together again, and this time take the fingers around to the back of the neck rubbing gently the whole of the neck back and front and up into the medulla (back of the brain). Take the palms back to the knees.

Rub the palms and repeat the whole process on the mouth and chin including the cheekbones. To massage the head we start by rubbing the palms together and then leaning forward as we press the fingers of each hand into the floor for about 3 seconds. See photograph 37. Now take the tips of the fingers of each palm and tap the whole skull so that you feel the pressure is almost painful but not quite. See photograph 38. Take the palms back to the knees.

For the teeth, we clack the jaw 36 times. With hands on your knees, open your mouth and clack your teeth together lightly. Even if you have false teeth you will still be activating the acupuncture points of the jaw. This is important for the normal functioning of the bowel.

Next we rub the palms together, and this time using a closed fist rub the whole of one arm with one fist. The pressure should be firm. Repeat this on the other arm. Photograph 39.

Bring the palms back to the knees and rub them together again. This time the closed fist rubs the whole chest area using both fists together.

Take the palms back and rub them again. Now take the fists around to your lower back and rub the whole of the kidney area as shown in photograph 40.

Take [he palms back to the knees and repeat the rubbing together. Now place your left palm onto your left knee. Using the right thumb and forefinger, rub with a heavy action the point called Dragon Mouth Point or Colon 4, just between the thumb and forefinger. See photograph 41.

Repeat this procedure on each of your fingers, rubbing the whole way down to the tip with a little force. Then complete by rubbing the back of the left hand with the right palm. Repeat this procedure using the opposite hand.

The same procedure is carried out on the legs. Using the closed fist lightly punch the underside of the thigh and rub the top of the thigh. The same applies to the lower leg. Rub the toes and when completed take a hold of each foot and shake it gently as shown in photograph 42.

Also press using a little force all over the sole of each foot using the tips of the fingers.

To complete the self-massage, place each fist onto your chest and breathe in. As you gently throw both fists out, bend at the waist as far as you are able and breathe out. Hold this posture for about 10 seconds before sitting up and breathing in again. See photograph 43.

Stand up and in a very relaxed way swing each arm in turn until the fist strikes the shoulder. You should feel a slight shock wave. Repeat this 3 times on each shoulder. See photograph

Chapter Six

Breathing Techniques

The five major schools of breathing are medical, Confucian, Buddhist, Taoist and wushu or martial arts. Medical breathing techniques aim at strengthening ones overall health and are mainly preventive. The Confucian school of breathing deals with self-cultivation and temperament. Taoist breathing deals with ones moral character and longevity. The Buddhist breathing exercises are broken into two lines of thought and involve mainly the mind. The first Buddhist school is called Samadhi and claims that everything in the world is illusionary. The other school is that of meditation which deals with the cultivation of the mind and the preservation of all forms of life on earth. The wushu method of breathing is for physical training and good health. All of these schools have one thing in common, that of training of the mind and development of the qi, or Qi.

The breath is the most important part of the Chinese self-healing arts. There are certain ways to breathe while performing the various exercises described in this book.

The first and most important way to breathe is the natural way i.e. we try to get our breathing back to a more natural way, the way of the child. As we grow older and are affected by stress, the cause of 70% of all modern diseases, our breathing rises to the upper chest and we end up only using the top portion of our lungs. The lungs start just under the collarbone and end at the bottom of the rib cage. But the major part of the lungs is the part covered by the ribs on either side of the abdomen. This part, through tension and stress is sometimes not used, and so we are only receiving a small amount of oxygen. We try to compensate for this by breathing faster. One of the big faults in western posture is the pull the belly in and stick out the chest syndrome supposed to look good on men and women. But in order to pull in the stomach and stick out the chest we have to tense certain muscles and this restricts our lung capacity.

The first thing to do is relax the upper chest and shoulders so that the breath is able to go deeper into the lungs and eventually fill up the whole lung again.

If you find it difficult to relax the chest while standing in a Qigong position, lie down and place your palms across your stomach. As you breathe in, feel the lower abdomen pushing outward and try to totally relax the chest. It may not look too cosmetic but it may just save your life. Feel your palms rise with each breath and lower with each exhalation. Try to not force the action, just breathe and it should happen naturally IF YOU ARE RELAXED. If you have access to a small child, see how it breathes and copy that. If you have been doing heavy exercise then the chest may rise a little more with the breath, but generally the chest should not stick right out.

Breathe with your nose; thats what its for There are certain times when we breathe through the mouth and Ill cover these later. Try breathing naturally while doing the triple warmer exercise covered earlier C this tends to open the lungs more. And remember there is a natural wait from inhaling to exhaling unless violent exercise has been undertaken.

Natural Breath

For spiritual stimulation and physical comfort, try using the natural breathing technique just described. Now we try to use the imagination to cause certain energy circulations to take place.

As you breathe out, imagine some physical object, say a ball-bearing or a marble, rolling from the crown, down the centre of your forehead, right down the front of your body to a

position about 3" below the navel. This is the tan-tien or psychic centre. Only use this on the out breath.

Reverse Breath

This breath is said to aid digestion and enable us to circulate the Qi around the upper heavenly circuit.

The physical movements of this breath are different to the natural breath just practised. As you breathe in, pull the lower abdomen in and as you breathe out, push the lower abdomen out. This is reverse breathing. The visualisation for this breath is to imagine the marble being sucked up along your backbone from just under the anus (CV 1). The marble continues along the backbone and up to the crown, then down to just where the tongue is touching the highest part of your hard palate. Now as you breathe out, the marble travels down the tongue and then down the front of the body to the tan-tien. On the next in breath you suck the marble downward from tan-tien to CV 1 and then back up the backbone as before. This is called the upper heavenly circulation. The backbone route is the yang meridian and the front is the yin meridian.

Harmonising breath

This breath is said to harmonise the balance of yin and yang in the body and uses the reverse breath to circulate Qi around the macro cosmic circulation.

The inhalation is the same as for reverse breath, but this time as you breathe out take the marble right down both thighs and over the large toe to Kidney point 1, mentioned earlier. As you breathe in the Qi comes up along the back of both legs, joins at the coccyx, then up the backbone, and continues as for reverse breath

Pre-natal or Foetal Breath

When a baby is in the womb it uses reverse breathing, using the part of the abdomen under the diaphragm. This is called pre-natal; everything above the diaphragm is called post-natal. In order to mix the inner and outer breath, we must breathe like an unborn foetus as well as a young child. To do this we must perform both reverse and natural breathing.

As you breathe in, suck in the lower abdomen under the diaphragm. At the same time the part of the abdomen on the top of the diaphragm is pushed out. Now as you breathe out, the lower abdomen is pushed out while the upper is contracted. This causes a sort of wave effect and when the lungs are at full inhalation, the pre-natal and post-natal Qi is allowed to mix at the border of the diaphragm. This is because the Qi in the pre-natal part and in the post-natal part flow in opposite directions. If we breathe normally, using only natural breathing or only reverse breathing, then the two kinds of Qi would not meet. As you breathe out, a little of the outer Qi is added to the inner Qi, and that is how we build up our store of Qi by breathing.

Tortoise Breathing

Tortoise breath is exactly the same as pre-natal breath, but you must hold the breath in before exhaling for a count of 10. This allows more Qi to mix. It must be noted that it should take around 4 years to reach the level of tortoise breath, allowing some months on each of the preceding breaths.

Cleansing Breath

This is one of the times when we use the mouth to breathe. Breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. This is said to cleanse the body of impurities and relax inner tension and lower fever. Sighing is a spontaneous manifestation of this sort of breathing.

Tonic Breath

This is the reverse of the previous breathing technique. This time breathe in through the mouth and out through the nose. This is said to act as a tonic and build up the body. This breath is said to give more energy and improve blood circulation.

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