

Qigong - The Art of Life

Qigong is a powerful healing system developed in China many thousands of years ago it is one of the components of the holistic system of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Qigong (pronounced Chi-Kung) is a new term that has been used over the last fifty years to describe all the Chinese energy techniques. The word Qigong is made up of two Chinese characters, *Qi* refers to the energy of life, the vital energy which flows through the network of meridians in the body and connects with the energy or Qi of the universe. In Japan and Korea it's known as Ki and if studying Yoga the term Prana is used. Most cultures have a similar terminology for life energy. *Gong* is a term which translates to work, mastery and training. Qigong therefore translates to energy work, working with the energy of life or mastering the energy of life.

There are thousands of different styles and systems of Qigong, using different static postures, movement, breathing techniques, mental training and visualisation methods, either done standing, moving, walking, sitting or lying. Traditionally Qigong is used for training of the Qi energy for martial, medical or spiritual purposes.

The flow of energy or Qi (Chi) in our body is directly related to our posture and body movements, breath and mental condition. When the mind, body and breath are in harmony, our Qi will also be in harmony. It will flow naturally through the energy channels or meridians of the body, allowing us to connect with the energy of the universe. The practice of Qigong is a conscious way of regulating our own energy system, it's a bit like we are a musical instrument and we need to regularly tune our posture, breath and mind enabling our instrument to play to it's full potential.

“Too much color, the eyes cannot enjoy.

Too much noise, the ears cannot receive, and music cannot be heard or appreciated.

Too complicated, too prepared, or too processed food causes the tongue to lose its taste.

Too much rushing around, hunting and searching, maddens the mind.

Too much interest in hard-to-obtain goods distorts one's behaviour.

The wise one likes to maintain one's inner essence, and thus is not enslaved by sensory pleasure.

Sensory pleasures and the outer search for material goods create burdens and cause one's life to become scattered.”

Lao Tzu, Dao De Jing, Chapter 12

An important principle underlying Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and qigong is the understanding of the balance and harmony between human beings and our environment. Daoism and TCM view the human being as a micro (internal) representation of our macro (external) environment. In this ancient vision of the body, the internal organs function differently to the way they are understood to function in Western Medicine. Each solid organ (Yin) has a corresponding flowing organ (Yang). They also correspond to the Five Elements, relating to different seasons, colours and emotions. The resulting network of relationships is complex, and scholars study and meditate for many years to fully understand these connections between the internal and the external world.

Ba Duan Jin

Translating to 'Eight Method Essence', Ba Duan Jin has a few different names outside of China such as the Eight Pieces of Brocade, the Eight Golden Treasures, the Eight Pieces of Silk and many others. It is one of the most renowned and widely practised forms of Qigong in China and known throughout the world by martial artists, Tai Chi groups, Qigong and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners for its healing benefits. Its origin traces back to ancient times. History books suggest that the legendary Yeuh Fei 1100AD (Sung Dynasty), a Chinese General, was an early proponent, and the first

to train his troops in Martial Arts (Wushu) and the therapeutic, self-healing standing Ba Duan Jin. There are variations of the Ba Duan Jin, but they all follow the same principle.

Also known as Taoist Yoga, in traditional terms, it is a Wei Dan Gong style of Qigong which translates to ‘external elixir training’. There are eight physical stretching movements which stimulate the flow of Qi through the organ meridians, which helps increase strength and flexibility of the whole body.

Meridians

While Western medicine recognises only three circulatory networks in the human body – the nervous system, the lymphatic system and the blood vessels – traditional Chinese medicine includes a fourth system: the energy network of meridians. Meridians are pathways or channels which transport Qi through the whole body ensuring the tissues and organs are supplied with fluids and nutrients. They are all interconnected and form a network to connect the internal organs to external parts of the body.

Meridian lines cannot be seen or felt like other systems in the body such as the circulatory or nervous system. When a person is in good (balanced) health, their meridian lines will be open and clear of blockages. Qi can then flow smoothly.

These meridian lines can be associated with the functioning of the body’s internal organs. The health of an organ is affected by the corresponding meridian and has a direct impact on the strength and energy of the meridian. If these organs function abnormally, the energy will stagnate in the meridians and cause illness. To return to good health the blockage must be released and the flow of energy normalised.

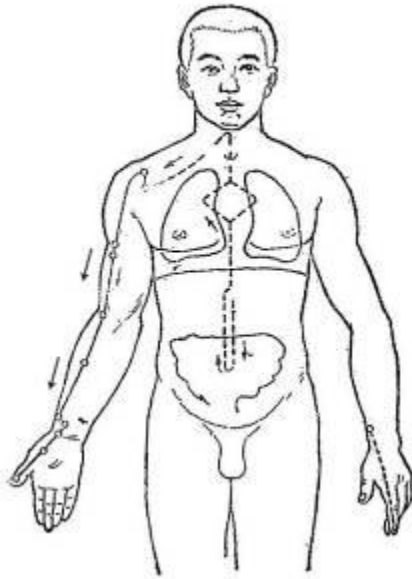
Second Piece – Regulating the Lung and Large Intestine Channels

The season of autumn and dry weather correspond to the Metal Element, as do the emotions of grief and guilt, and the colour silver or white.

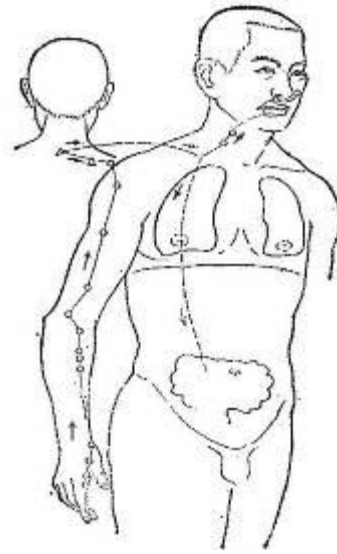
The main purpose of the lungs is respiration. The body takes in fresh air (oxygen) and expels waste gas (carbon dioxide) through the nose, helping the metabolism of the body function smoothly. According to TCM, the lungs operate the Qi of the whole body. Essence is absorbed from the universe through the nose into the lungs and spread throughout the whole body.

The Lung (Yin) channel originates at an area below the collar bone and runs down the inside of the arm to the outside of the thumb. The Large Intestine (Yang) channel originates from the outside of the index finger through the Hegu, or tiger’s mouth, between the thumb and index finger along the outside of the arm to the shoulder to the neck and finishing on the opposite side of the face near the nose and cheek bone.

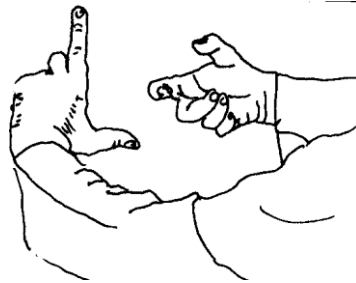
The Lung Channel



The Large Intestine Channel



Opening the Tiger's Mouth





A



B



C



D (side view)



E



F

Begin by standing in the wider horse-riding stance*, feet parallel, arms relaxing down in front.

A Raise the arms, clench fists in front of the chest.

B With the left hand, open the tiger's mouth – extend thumb and index finger to form a right angle. With the right hand, close tiger's mouth – bend second knuckle of index finger, keeping thumb down (see diagram, previous page).

C, D Extend the elbows horizontally, pull both arms back, and whilst breathing in stretch the left arm straight to the side with eyes focused over extended index finger. Keep the right arm bent, and elbow level with the shoulder. Stretch across your chest as if pulling back on a bow (stimulating the Lung and Large Intestine channels) and 'release the arrow' from the right hand.

E, F Breathe out, bring the hands back to the centre of the chest, reverse hand positions and repeat on opposite side.

Repeat 4 times to each side.

Return to basic stance, arms down by your sides, feet together and close the eyes. **Relax and feel.**

* All movements using the horse-riding stance help stimulate the Kidney Channel.

The Art of Life with Qigong Master Simon Blow

One and a half day workshop Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th May 2012
Elwood Centre for Wellbeing, Elwood, Melbourne, Victoria

In this one and a half day workshop learn and practise the ancient **Ba Duan Jin** and **Taiji Qigong Shibashi**, these self healing methods are from Simon's Book/DVD. The Art of Life.

Ba Duan Jin translates to the Eight Method Essence and is also known as Daoist Yoga. It's one of the most widely practiced and best known forms of Qigong, learn eight simple exercises that stretch the major muscles, organs of the body and stimulate the meridian system.

Taiji Qigong Shibashi - is a very popular form of Qigong known throughout the world for its healing benefits. The eighteen movements help strengthen the whole body, massage the internal organs, muscles and joints, as well as increase the circulation of Qi and blood through the whole body. Simon will teach the key points for each movement. **No previous experience is required, all welcome**

Saturday 19th May 2012, 9.30am to 4.30pm

Sunday 20th 9.30am to 12.30pm

Elwood Centre for Wellbeing, (upstairs) 41 Glenhuntly Road, Elwood

Cost \$195 includes Book/DVD Absorbing the Essence

Concession /*Early Bird Discount \$185

**To receive early bird discount, \$30 deposit must be received before 11th May, 2012*

Bookings and information please phone Helen Paige 0439 710 740 info@medicalintuition.net.au

Simon Blow (02) 9559 8153

Simon Blow is the author of numerous books, DVDs and Audio CDs about this ancient healing art. He has been a full time professional teacher (Laoshi) since 1992; he has received training and certification from Traditional Hospitals and Daoist Monasteries in China and has been given authority to share these techniques. Simon has been initiated into Dragon Gate Daoism and given the name of Xin Si meaning Genuine Wisdom. He also is a Standing Council Member of The World Academic Society of Medical Qigong, Beijing China.

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