QI GONG
FOR
HEALTH & LONGEVITY

THE ANCIENT CHINESE ART OF
RELAXATION / MEDITATION
/ PHYSICAL FITNESS



Simon Wang, M.D., Ph.D. & Julius L. Liu, M.D.

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Qi Gong



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FOR
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THE ANCIENT CHINESE ART OF RELAXATION / MEDITATION / PHYSICAL FITNESS

Dr. Simon Wang & Dr. Julius L. Liu

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The information, procedures and suggestions contained in this book are not intended to replace the services of your physician. All matters regarding your health require medical supervision.

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This is dedicated to our parents.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

SIMON WANG: After medical training in China, he completed his Ph.D. degree in neuroendocrinology and post-doctoral work from the West. He studied and conducted medical research in Melbourne, Australia and Boston, Los Angeles, USA, and published more than 30 scientific papers (Journal of Endocrinology, Neuroendocrinology, Brain Research, Journal of Physiology, Journal of Neurophysiology, The Journal of Neuroscience, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, et al.). Currently he devotes his time and effort to both China and USA.

His interest in traditional Chinese medicine and Qi Gong goes back to childhood, influenced by his family. He also received his Masters degree in acupuncture anesthesia in China, and has been teaching and researching in China.

JULIUS L. LIU: He is a renown neurophysiologist, once conducted scientific research on acupuncture anesthesia, has published numerous scientific papers and is the author of "Thinking of the Brain" and other books.

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PREFACE

This is a book written and edited by people who were trained and experienced in two different cultures, the East and the West.

In every country, in every culture, in every religion, past and present there are unique characters.

On the subject of how well we take care of the body by exercises, in China, for thousands of years, the approach has been to preserve and store the body's energy, to slow down the metabolism, not to burn up the energy and accelerate the metabolism. The aim is to exercise both inner and outer components of the body, i.e., the mind and body together, and not merely the body alone. The exercise is performed in a gentle, relaxed, calm fashion, and not in an intense athletic training regimen. It is the wisdom of self-cultivation, self-fitness and self-satisfaction, and not the idea of athleticism and competition.

When facing development through infancy, youth, adulthood and senility, it is our wish that continued well-being should accompany the passage of time, and even that the life should be immortal. Traditional Chinese medicine recognizes that health and longevity can be achieved and maintained by cultivation and promotion of one's own mind and body. This art is called Qi Gong (Chi Kung).

Qi is the vital force or energy influencing every aspect of our lives, including connections between the mind and body. This vital force

can be sensed, controlled, regulated and strengthened within oneself, through a system of regulated breathing, self-massage, relaxation, meditation and physical exercises. These disciplines will lead to good health and longevity.

Today, it is estimated that more than 50 million people practise Qi Gong in China alone. Qi Gong is the most popular practice of all ancient Chinese fitness and healing techniques for maintaining good health in mind and body, preventing disease, relieving sickness and prolonging life. Their value has been proved over the millennia from generation to generation, and thus has stood the test of time – at least 3000 years.

We have reviewed hundreds of old Chinese books on the subject, dating back hundreds of years. After combing through a mass of information, the essence of all the material is presented here. Our fondest hope is that this book will make our readers acquainted with Qi, and encourage them to practise Qi Gong, and thus aspire to live healthier and longer lives.

Following is a true story of Simon Wang.

In 1968, China was at the height of the Culture Revolution (the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution)[1]. In our city a terrible civil war was raging as city folks, particularly the students, organized into different political groups competing for power. Society was in chaos; daily living was in jeopardy; all the schools were closed. To escape these horrific conditions, at the age ten, I was sent a thousand miles away to live with my grandparents in the countryside. My grandparents were living in a small, simple, quiet, very beautiful fishing village on a small island, situated at the west side of Dong Ting lake[2] in Hunan province. This is the second largest lake in China, some 250 miles wide. I remember that it was like the ocean because the water was blue and I could not see the opposite shore, and often the waves

1, A mass political movement, 1966 - 1976. 2, 洞庭湖, 湖南省.

were so big that small boats dared not sail. How long people had lived there I did not know. Could it have been hundreds or thousands of years? Often they would tell me that their whole lives were centered on their village, the water, the boats, the fish and the hot chilli (in that region people added hot chilli to every dish).

My grandfather was once the only person practising medicine in the village. This was traditional Chinese medicine carried on as a family tradition from generation to generation. When I arrived, my uncle was in his turn the only medical doctor in the village.

Of the many old medical books in the house, one held a special attraction to me. This book contained many ink drawings of human figures in various attitudes – lying, sitting, standing, etc., but few words, compared to other books. To my surprise, many of the figures appeared quite familiar, as they illustrated the exercises my father did each morning.

Among my earliest memories are ones of my father practising Ba Duan Jin[3] and An Mo Gong[4], two types of Qi Gong[5]. First thing every morning he did was these exercises in the house, directing me to be quiet and not to disturb him.

My father told me, "People who practise these exercises live for a long, long time. If a person begins to practise at age thirty, he or she can live for four-hundred years; if at forty, for three-hundred years; if at fifty, the person can live for two-hundred years old." It seemed that the earlier you start, the longer you live. "Suppose someone began practising at seventy or eighty years old?", I asked. My father replied, "A person who starts practising at any age can expect to live at least one-hundred years." "These exercises are extremely old and formerly were practised only by monks living deep in the great mountains near our home." "I have never been sick, even a cold, since I began practising them." ...

Now I took the book from the shelf to begin at once, in the hope that, with so youthful a start, I would live for many hundreds of years. It was the pictures which really interested me, rather than the text. After each reading I put the book under my pillow.

3,八段錦. 4,按摩功. 5,氣功.

I was happy in the village. Untouched by war, I went to school every day just like any ten year old kid. It was so different from the life in the city, as the Chinese say, "The mountains are high; the emperor is far away". Soon, however, things started to change. One day, returning from school, I saw people running. Some were shouting, "Welcome to our village, Red Guards!" "Down with the landlords!" "Take the landlords struggle!" ... I understood immediately that something serious was happening. In the city the Red Guards had been a familiar sight. They entered some people's houses to search for the "Four Olds" – old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits, and they seized people in their homes, arrested them and paraded them in public, abusing and insulting them and their families.

I ran home, telling myself that it was unbelievable that Red Guards should come here, yet so far from the city. I wondered how they got

here and would our house be searched. Presently I saw a big steamboat anchored on the water and several Red Guards still standing on deck.

They did search our house. Every thing was in a mess inside and many of our goods were taken. The first thing I noticed was that all the books on the bookshelf were gone. I rushed to my bed and lifted the pillow. To my relief and joy, the book was still there. At the same time, on the village lane, my grandparents, with baskets and tools hanging around their necks, were being pushed about and abused in a struggle session organized by the Red Guards. Some boys including my friends, whom I used to play with, yelled at me, "You are a landlord's offspring!" It was a sad moment. My family was innocent of any wrong doing. I guessed that their only difference was, before 1949, in having had some education, in having worked hard, and in having lived in some decent conditions, which resulted in being classified as "the landlord class".

At school things changed also. The teachers never asked me questions in the class anymore, although I still was the best with highest marks in every subject. Chairman Mao's Red Book (quota-

tions from Zedong Mao[6]) was given to every pupil except me and seven others of landlord family background. Each morning before normal classes commenced, all teachers and pupils stood in line in front of a picture of Chairman Mao, reading loudly from the Red Book things like, "Never forget class struggling"; "Destroy the old and establish the new"; "A revolution is an uprising, an act of violence whereby one class overthrows another." But, eight of us stood in a separate line, listening with bowed heads. We were made to feel different indeed; this was our humiliation.

My concerns, however, were with a different book altogether.

One weekend, a few weeks after our house was searched, the same steamboat appeared again, watched by a crowd on the shore. As soon as I saw them, I knew our house would be searched again, so I ran straight home. This time I would hide the book before they arrived. I took the book from underneath my pillow, went out and put the book among the bamboo leaves at the lower edge of the roof (All the houses were built out of bamboo: bamboo poles mixed with mud for the walls, the leaves for the roof.).

Later on , indeed, the Red Guards came again to our house. This time I stood by, watching their every move. They were looking for antiques, valuables and anything which looked fancy to them. I hoped that they would not check my bed like last time, but I was wrong. One Red Guard went to my bed and checked, even examining the stuffing of my pillow. Although frightened, I was so happy at having thwarted their attempt to remove my precious book. As on the first occasion, my grandparents were rounded up, this time without baskets and tools hanged on their necks. One reason was that the Red Guards did not find as many things as last time. There was no doubt in my mind that it was partly because they did not find the book. I was proud of myself to think that in some way I was helping my grandparents.

Many days after the departure of the Red Guards, I went searching in the place where I had hidden my book. Strangely, I could not find it. Somehow it was gone. Later, I confessed to my grandfather

6, Zedong Mao or Mao Tse-tung, 1878-1976.

that I had lost the book. He said to me, "It is all right. It is a book about Chinese Qi Gong, an ancient system of exercises." For a long time, I grieved about the loss of the book. It was such a pity. How could it have happened that the book was lost?

Over the years I have told many of my loved ones about my experience with the book. Many times have I dreamed that I have found the book, but only to be disappointed on awakening. Many times have I dreamed that I had written a book exactly like it, and distributed copies widely among many different people. This would ensure that the book would never be lost.

Twenty years passed and in the winter of 1988, with a Ph.D. in neuroendocrinology, I returned to China from overseas. I was surprised to find widespread popular enthusiasm for Qi Gong; many people practised Qi Gong, talked about Qi Gong. The whole country appeared to be immersed in the midst of Qi Gong "heat". I was invited to many Qi Gong events. In view of my scientific training I was encouraged to embark upon modern scientific research on Qi Gong.

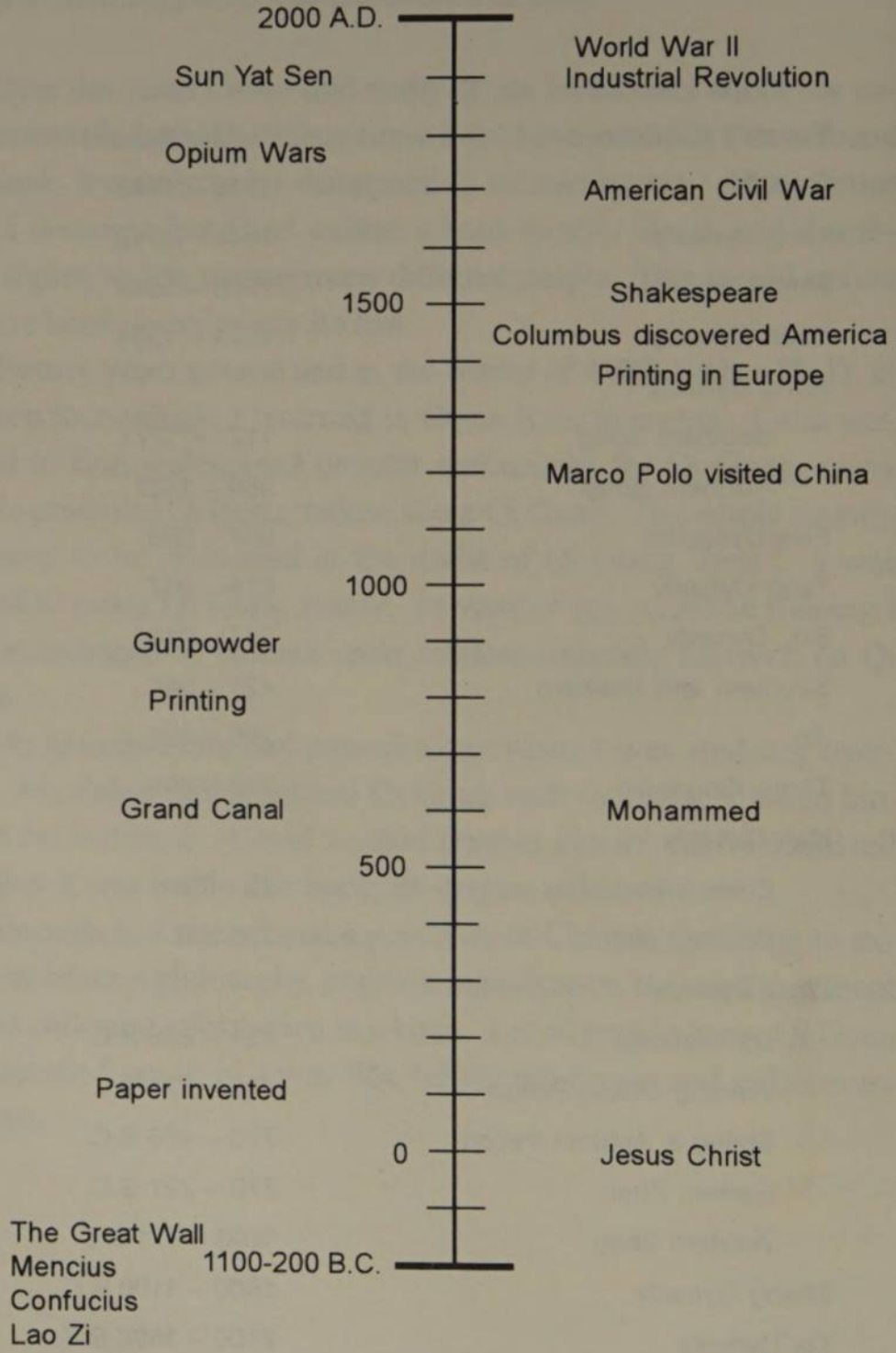
My grandparents had passed away when I was studying overseas. My father still practised Qi Gong each morning. I asked him about the lost book. Could we find another like it? All he could tell was that it was a valuable book, its origins unknown.

Since then, I started making a study of Chinese Qi Gong: to explore its history, philosophy, practice, significance, etc., and to present all this collected information in a book. Let all people know Qi Gong and benefit from it, in a way that fulfills my dream and rediscovers the past.

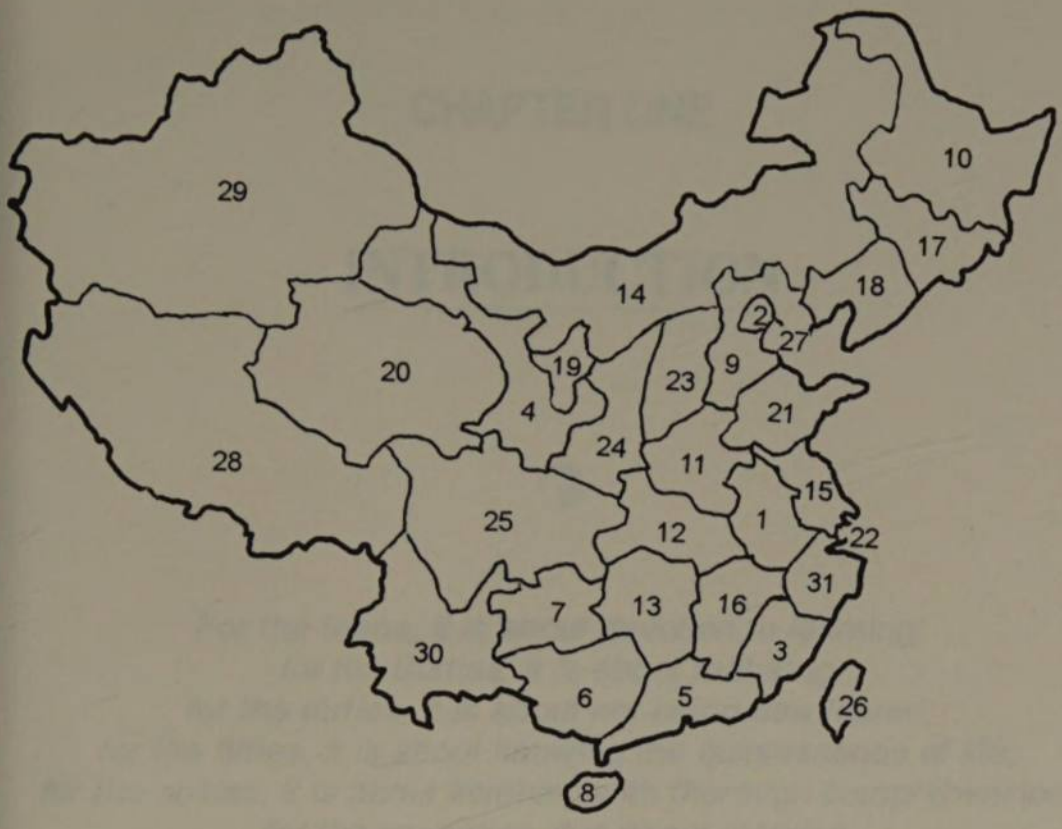
CHRONOLOGY OF CHINESE HISTORY

People's Republic	1949 – Present
Republic	1912 – 1949
Qing Dynasty	1644 – 1912
Ming Dynasty	1368 – 1644
Yuan Dynasty	1271 – 1368
Song Dynasty	
Southern Song	1127 – 1271
Northern Song	960 – 1127
Five Dynasties	907 – 960
Tang Dynasty	618 – 907
Sui Dynasty	581 – 618
Southern and Northern	420 – 581
Jin	265 – 420
Three Kingdoms	220 – 265
Han Dynasty	
Eastern Han	25 – 220
Western Han	206 B.C. – 8 A.D.
Zhou Dynasty	
Qin Dynasty	221 – 206 B.C.
Warring States Period	475 – 221 B.C.
Spring & Autumn Period	770 – 476 B.C.
Eastern Zhou	770 – 221 B.C.
Western Zhou	1100 – 771 B.C.
Shang Dynasty	1600 – 1100 B.C.
Xia Dynasty	2100 – 1600 B.C.

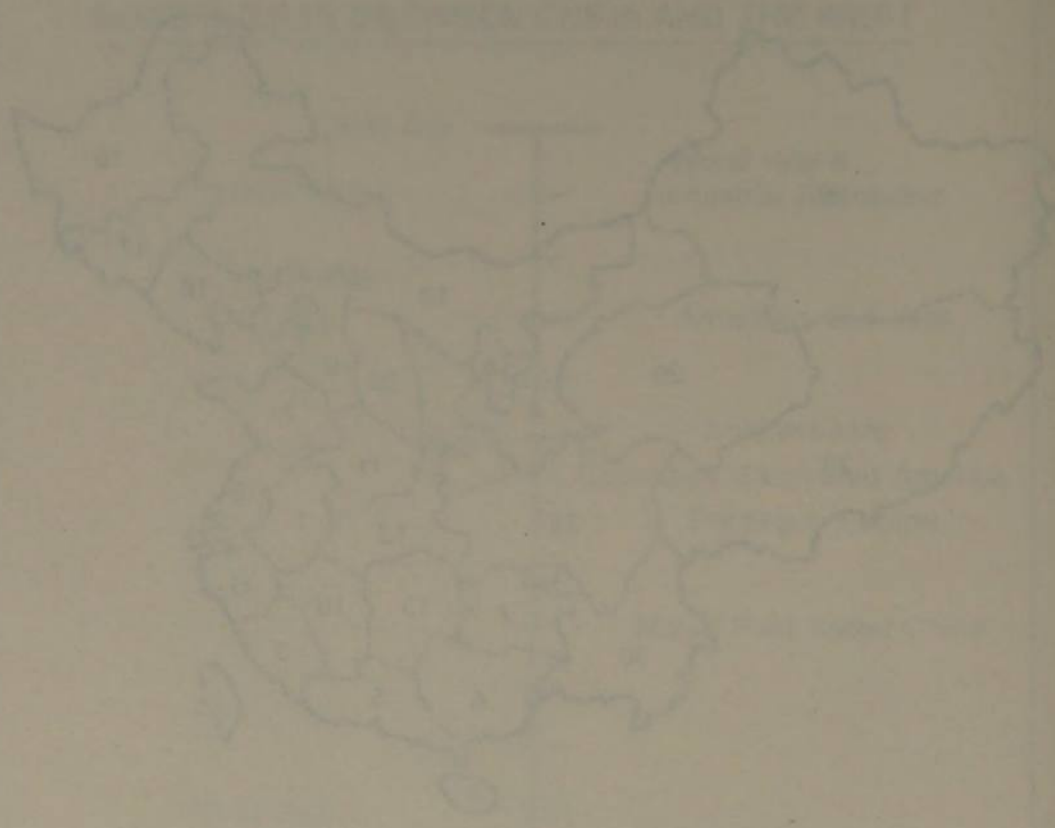
SOME EVENTS BETWEEN CHINA AND THE WEST



MAP OF CHINA



1. Anhui
2. Beijing
3. Fujian
4. Gansu
5. Guangdong
6. Guangxi Zhuang Aut. Region
7. Guizhou
8. Hainan
9. Hebei
10. Heilongjiang
11. Henan
12. Hubei
13. Hunan
14. Inner Mongolia Aut. Region
15. Jiangsu
16. Jiangxi
17. Jilin
18. Liaoning
19. Ningxia Hui Aut. Region
20. Qinghai
21. Shandong
22. Shanghai
23. Shanxi
24. Shannxi
25. Sichuan
26. Taiwan
27. Tianjin
28. Tibet Aut. Region
29. Xinjiang Uygur Aut. Region
30. Yunnan
31. Zhejiang



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION



For the teens, it is about devotion to learning;
for the thirties, it is about maturing;
for the forties, it is about not being bewildered;
for the fifties, it is about knowing the quintessence of life;
for the sixties, it is about listening with thorough comprehension;
for the seventies, it is about relaxing.

— Confucius (551–479 B.C.)

For thousands of years, in addition to her natural beauty, China was a land legendary for the splendor of her culture which generated ingenious ideas, a prolific literature, and remarkable skills and accomplishments in various fields. People around the world acknowledged and admired Chinese achievements, many of which had a profound impact on the history of mankind, considering the invention of the compass, paper making, printing, gunpowder, the manufacture of porcelain and the construction of the Great Wall. However, we believe that the greatest treasure ancient China has bequeathed us is the traditional Chinese medicine, which has proved so beneficial to the health and longevity of tens of millions of Chinese, generation after generation, throughout the ages right down to the present. Now in the West it is enjoying increasing popularity.

Traditional Chinese medicine is founded on Qi[1], which is regarded as the vital force or the energy influencing all aspects of health and healing in the mind and body. This vital force can be controlled and strengthened within oneself under the name of Qi Gong[2].

Everyone experiences days when one feels good, strong and full of energy, is interested in things, is busy yet coping with the workload, has a positive attitude and requires little sleep. By contrast, there are

1,氣. 2,氣功.

days when one feels bad, a certain weakness and lethargy, is easily exhausted, loses interest in things and has negative attitude: everything goes wrong. To these, we speak of "good days" or "high gear", as opposed to "bad days" or "low gear". Chinese express these contrasting modes as "high Qi state" or "low Qi state", respectively. They are the results of the effects of mind on body and body on mind.

In the West, the concept of Qi or Qi Gong is largely unknown or is misunderstood. It is often regarded with skepticism as an exotic practice associated with myth and superstition, or as involving the supernatural in some way. These misconceptions have prevailed because of a dearth of information available to people in the West. Manifold differences between cultures, religions, customs, languages as well as geographic barriers have hindered exchange of information and discussion. This book attempts to overcome the differences and provides information available, accessible and comprehensible to the world.

However, first, in the nature of this matter, we must realize the fact that Qi Gong as a fitness and healing art has existed for thousands of years and transmitted through mythological, ancient and modern eras. Qi Gong has been synthesized, and refined over thousands of years of vast experience, observation, knowledge, research and practice distilled from many different schools and sources of diverse background. An immense body of literature has developed over this long history. It is estimated that there are more than 4000 important traditional Chinese medical books from the past. Thus, it is possible to present here only its essence, to which we add our personal understanding and experience.

Second, there are admittedly many aspects of Qi Gong which, if scrutinized by the standards of today's science, appear unconventional or not completely satisfactory. In our presentation we aim to bring it into the perspectives of modern Western thinking.

Thirdly, since we are dealing with a system ancient in origin, of an unfamiliar culture, often mysterious to the West, our readers are asked to keep their minds free of prejudice and misconception, and receptive to foreign concepts. After all, it is a natural mental and

physical exercise without engaging any religious rites.

Fourthly, we reiterate that Qi Gong has long been known as a simple, gentle, safe, and effective exercise for relaxation, meditation and physical fitness with small demands on energy, strength, space and time. Please remember Aesculapius's motto regarding healing: "Primo non nocere" (first, do no harm). It can be practised in the West even though the concept of Qi still seems not to be expressed adequately in Western medical terms.

Finally, we, as doctors trained in the medical systems of both East and West, feel a strong obligation to promote the practice of Chinese Qi Gong throughout the world, so that all people may benefit from the greatest gift that Chinese culture has to offer.

1.1 Qi in Action

The name of Madam Guo-Lin (1906-1984) is legendary in modern China. Born in Guangdong province and orphaned at the age of two, she lived with her grandfather, who was a Taoist priest and a Qi Gong master. At age forty, Guo was found to have uterine cancer. The tumor was removed, but subsequently spread. After six operations in eight years, doctors gave her six months to live. Despite this fatal sentence, determined not to give up the hope, Guo began to research and practise Qi Gong influenced by her grandfather's example in her childhood. In the park each day at dawn she diligently practised Qi Gong for two hours. Within six months, miraculously, her condition improved, the cancer was contained and she was able to live a normal life.

Guo's training exercises were called "the Five-Animal Play[3]", one of the oldest types of Qi Gong. Practitioners were trained using "internal Qi". The exercises consisted of relaxation, concentration, breathing, walking, dancing, mimicking the movements of the animals. It is believed that Qi Gong thus enhances the body's ability to resist cancer. Guo was so convinced of its power that she wrote a book entitled "Qi Gong: a new method for combating cancer". This

3.五禽戲.

was the first treatise ever written on this subject. From the late 1970s and until her death Guo as a great warrior led a public campaign against diseases. She organized many Qi Gong therapy classes in Beijing and traveled extensively throughout China, teaching and lecturing on cancer and disease control, which benefited hundreds of cancer patients, and thousands more sufferers of other ailments. She became a national hero.

Since 1985, the ancient healing and fitness art of Qi Gong has risen to the height of popularity all over China. The people say, "Qi Gong heat waves the whole nation." In the early morning every park is filled with hundreds and thousands of people practising Qi Gong, like a symbol of modern China in the eyes of foreign visitors. In all major cities there are Qi Gong clinics and many official and private Qi Gong organizations. Numerous publications devoted to the subject of Qi Gong are circulated, and various subjects of scientific research on Qi Gong are conducted in universities, hospitals and government research laboratories. In 1988 and 1993, two international



Qi Gong exercise in the park.

conferences on academic exchanges of medical Qi Gong were held and attended by delegates from more than twenty countries. Many Western scientists, including Americans, have made special visits to Chinese institutions to study Qi Gong and witness the results of therapy. Many Qi Gong masters have been invited to teach and demonstrate their skills in hospitals and universities in USA and in other industrialized countries.

On a personal note, we (the authors) were trained in Western medicine and science, but, as is the custom in nearly all Western-style medical schools in China, the students also received instruction in traditional Chinese medicine. Although a brief encounter, it nevertheless greatly influenced our thinking and practice. With this insight we are able to respect both systems and recognize an appropriate role for each in medical practice.



Traditional Chinese medicine works.

During our clinical training and later in medical practice, we witnessed innumerable firsthand accounts of Qi in action and the efficacy of traditional Chinese medicine.

(1) A young girl found relief from an asthma attack after drinking a cup of Chinese herbal tea.

(2) A woman injured in a traffic accident, under very severe stress condition, was unable to pass urine although her bladder was distended, which caused her a horrific pain and discomfort. At the

scene catheterization was not available, acupressure at Qi-cavities, He Gu[4] and Zu San Li[5], allowed her instantly to release urine.

(3) In a remote countryside, gastrectomy was performed under acupuncture anesthesia on a middle-aged farmer suffering from hemorrhage of the stomach.

(4) An elderly man suffering from a chronic appendicitis was pronounced too weak for surgery. He was treated by traditional Chinese medicine and given herbal infusions to drink and herbal applications to the skin of the abdominal wall. After several days, the condition subsided and he was discharged, cured, from hospital without surgical intervention.

It may be said in the West, "Well, these things might work for the Chinese." To these sceptics, we reply, "Consider the following two cases involving Western folks."

One hot summer day in 1987, a young Chinese doctor set out from Cape Karikari, North Island, New Zealand to a tour along the coast with the local postman, "John", who delivered mails to scattered, remote small communities in his jeep. Halfway through the journey they stopped at a beautiful small bay. "Have a look here; take a stroll; go for a swim", John said to the Chinese doctor . Walking towards the beach the Chinese doctor heard a cry for help. A lady standing in a small boat about 50 meters offshore was shouting, "Help! Help! Someone is drowning!" Without hesitation the Chinese doctor jumped into water. At the same time three other men also struck out toward the boat. After struggling for a while, they managed to carry the unconscious victim ashore. She was a lady in her 60s who had suffered a heart attack while sailing with her friend, and had fallen over board. Now she lay on the beach pale and cold; both respiration and heartbeat ceased. A group of about ten people stood by, shocked and helpless. Someone ran to phone the ambulance, but the nearest hospital was 20 minutes drive away. The Chinese doctor

4, 合谷. 5, 足三里.

spoke up, "I am a doctor. Please let me perform mouth to mouth resuscitation on the patient." During the rescue operation, from time to time, the Chinese doctor used his fingers, pressing the skin area between the victim's nose and upper lip, a vital Qi-cavity (called Ren Zhong[6]), which is most commonly employed in life-rescue situations such as this, as a part of Chinese CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation). As far as traditional Chinese medicine is concerned, Qi had stopped flowing in the patient. The finger pressure on Ren Zhong would reconnect important meridians which control heartbeat and respiration, and reactivate the flow of Qi. After about five minutes, irregular breathing began and then the heartbeat returned. Her condition continued improving as time went by. In exactly 20 minutes the ambulance siren was heard approaching.

Before leaving the scene the doctor from the ambulance, having heard what had happened, shook hands firmly with the Chinese doctor. "We do not expect the patient to recover," he said, "Particularly with her previous history of cardiovascular problems. In such situations we often fail. This lady was very lucky. Your Chinese CPR must have played a very important part in her survival. It is quite amazing."

The postman, John, said, "I will never forget the word – Qi."





Qi Gong class in the West.

6.人中.

The second incident occurred in a busy restaurant in Boston, Massachusetts, in the autumn of 1989. A middle-aged lady standing in line for the cashier suddenly fell to the floor. Her face was gray, her eyes rolled upwards, her breathing was labored, her limbs jerked. Apparently, she was in the grip of a seizure. Bystanders made no attempt to assist. Someone went to call the emergency service. A Chinese man approached and with his fingers pressed Qi-cavity (He Gu) in the victim's hands. Within a minute the victim awakened. "I feel something on my hands," she said. The Chinese man explained, "I have just used a Chinese medical technique, called Qi Gong on your hands." The lady soon disappeared into the crowd. All this happened before an emergency ambulance came. The onlookers were amazed and curious. They asked, "What did you do to that lady?" The Chinese man replied, "I used Chinese Qi Gong and Qi is in action." "Incredible!" they murmured.

1.2 What is Qi?

Qi has been the fundamental concept in Chinese philosophy. It is regarded as the only elemental substance which possesses force or energy in the universe. At the very original stage of initiation of the universe, there was nothing but Qi. Because of the function and movement of Qi, the nature occurred and developed into the universe, so did the earth, man and everything else, all of which are interrelated, interacted, interchanged and interdependent.

The universe has everything you can think of. As the result of Qi man was formed as a microcosm of the universe, a little universe, which has everything you can think of as well. The universe has Qi as the energy, so does man. The universe has spirit, so does man. The earth consists of water mostly, so does man (water constitutes about 75 percent or more of the body). The universe has the sun and the moon, rain and thunder while man has the head, eyes, tears and voice. The earth has mountains, valleys, plains, rivers, trees and grasses while man has the shoulders, armpits, belly, vessels and hair. The mountains can smile and the rivers can sing, so can man. The earth can be

polluted and sick, so can man. The universe needs the balance and the harmony of Qi, so does man. Both the universe and man obey the same laws.



A natural scenery in China.

In traditional Chinese medicine, it is believed that life is the result of Qi, known as "To live is to have Qi and to die is to not have Qi." Generally speaking, Qi within the body comes partly from heaven and partly from earth by absorption through lungs, digestive tract and skin. Qi travels in the meridians of the body and is stored in the Qi-cavities (acupoints) of the meridians, but it is not noticed physically. Qi governs the interplay between Yin and Yang[7], influences the relationship among the Five Elements[8], activates Zang Fu[9] (the internal organs or viscera) (see Chapter seven). Every illness can be attributed to the improper function of Qi.

In Chinese vocabulary the word "Qi" (pronounced "Chee[10]") usually means air and respiration, but it also has another essential meaning, which is "vital energy" or "life force". In modern scientific ter-

1.3 What is Qi Gong?

The term Qi Gong is made up of two Chinese characters, "Qi" and "Gong".

The definition of Qi has been described above.

"Gong" (pronounced "Kung[11]") has several meanings such as art, skill, work, success, but also exercise, manipulation and self-discipline. A literal translation of the two words together would be "manipulation of vital energy", "energy exercise", or "exercise of Qi". Additionally, other names for Qi Gong have been suggested, such as "breathing exercise", "breathing manipulation", "spirit Kung Fu", "spirit martial art", "internal Kung Fu", "internal exercise", "Chinese Yoga" or "Chinese meditation". However, none of them can properly convey its true meanings. Indeed Qi Gong is hard to define precisely, and it is virtually untranslatable, so it is better to let it stand alone, simply as Qi Gong.

In the course of one's life time, one's mind-body is constantly influenced by every aspect of changing nature, such as the weather, geographic location, seasons, temperature, colors, foods and emotion. Thus, the circulation of Qi needs "tuning up" periodically, otherwise Qi can become stagnant gradually and then disease occurs. Qi Gong functions as the "tuning up".

In principle, Qi Gong is an ancient Chinese art in which people are trained to achieve the sensation of Qi and manipulation of Qi by exercising the mind, breath and body or self-massage. Thus, a smooth functional activity of the organism and a state of dynamic equilibrium within the body are achieved. Experiencing, balancing, circulating, and promoting Qi are the essence of Qi Gong exercise. The goal is to maintain well-being in mind and body, to prevent disease, to relieve sickness and to prolong life.

In traditional Chinese medicine, an exercise should consist of two parts, the "inner[12]" and "outer[13]", both equally important. The inner exercise influences Jing Luo[14] (meridians) and Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera) while the outer exercise influences the muscles,

11, 功. 12, 內. 13, 外. 14, 經絡.

joints, ligaments and limbs. Qi Gong can accomplish the two missions.

Furthermore, Qi Gong is an exercise of preserving and storing body energy, of slowing down the metabolism, with heart rate and respiratory rate reduced, and above all without any undue exertion.



Life-size clay figures were buried in 207 B.C.

Qi Gong, Tai Ji Quan[15] (popularly known as "Tai Chi[16]") and Gong Fu[17] (pronounced Kung Fu, known as Chinese martial art) are like triplets from the same family. In theory they share many similarities and their training methods overlap. However, they are different. Qi Gong focuses more on:

- deeper concentration in the mind;
- sensation of Qi;
- emission of Qi from some skillful Qi Gong masters.

By contrast, Tai Ji Quan places more emphasis on body movement with slowness and fluidity, while Gong Fu executes body movement with strength and speed.

15, 太極拳. 16, 太極. 17, 功夫.

1.4 Different Forms of Qi

Generally, in ancient Chinese philosophy, Qi can be classified into three classes:

(1) the Heaven Qi which consists of energies from the sun, the moon;
(2) the Earth Qi from the objects (like mountains, rivers), plants and living creatures on the earth, gravity and the magnetic field of the earth;
(3) the Human Qi from within oneself.



An illustration from an old book
– the relation of Heaven Qi, Human Qi and Earth Qi.

Three elements integrate and influence each other, resulting in what we and the surroundings are today.

As it might be expected, the concept of Qi permeated ancient Chinese medical wisdom, gradually forming a complex Qi system in the body. The balance and harmony of Qi is the center of human well-being. Broadly speaking, different forms of Qi within the body can be classified in accordance with its distribution, source, direction, func-

tion, quality, etc. In addition, various classifications have been made in different schools. To sum up, in medical Qi Gong, there are:

- Zhen Qi[18] (true Qi, essential Qi or internal Qi), which is involved in the function of connecting and nourishing various parts in the body, known as circulating Qi in the meridians and the main factor of life and death;
- Yuan Qi[19] (source Qi or Qi of the kidney), which is involved in the function of reproduction;
- Ying Qi[20] (nutrient Qi), which is circulating inside the vessels, known as blood;
- Da Qi[21] (the Qi from air), which is inhaled and exhaled in normal breathing;
- Gu Qi[22] (part of the earth Qi), which is the essence of foods planted on earth;
- Wei Qi[23] (defensive or protective Qi), which is distributed in muscles and skin and circulating outside the vessels to warm and nourish the subcutaneous tissues and defend the body against external noxious agents;
- Xie Qi[24] (malign Qi), which is the elements causing various diseases;
- Wai Qi[25] (external Qi), which is emitted from some skilful Qi Gong masters.

All the Qi(s) above inter-depend, interact and transform each other, as it was often said, "When Zhen Qi is sufficient; Wei Qi will flourish." In Qi Gong exercises, Qi refers most the Zhen Qi (true Qi, essential Qi or internal Qi), which is regarded as "the primary Qi" or "the Qi of Qi(s)".

It has been reported that Wai Qi (external Qi) can be released at will and even visualized by a skilful Qi Gong master. Wai Qi is usually emitted from fingertip(s), palm(s) and eyes of the master, and can act on a Qi Gong recipient to restore the balance of Qi, or to treat many different kinds of diseases, including stress, fatigue, pain,

18,真氣. 19,元氣. 20,營氣. 21,大氣. 22,谷氣. 23,衛氣. 24,邪氣. 25,外氣.

hypertension, arthritis, allergies, multiple sclerosis, cancers, and a host of other mind and body illnesses. Sometimes these actions can be carried out at a distance. This phenomenon is called the "external Qi therapy". There are various methods for training to emit Qi. However, since the purpose of our book is primarily for beginners to gain some basic knowledge of Qi Gong and to master certain basic Qi Gong maneuvers as a self-fitness and healing art, we will focus on internal Qi. Readers wishing to learn more about emitting Qi are referred to more advanced books.



A skilful Qi Gong master releasing Wai Qi to a recipient.

1.5 Different Types of Qi Gong

It is estimated that there are more than two hundred types of Qi Gong existing in China, but all of them have a common goal that it is to sense and control the Qi. They vary according to perceived applications. The followings are some examples:

(1) Based on their theoretical base, there are:

• Yi Jia Gong[26] (medical Qi Gong);

26. 醫家功.

- Dao Jia Gong[27] (Taoist Qi Gong);
- Fo Jia Gong[28] (Buddhist Qi Gong);
- Ru Jia Gong[29] (Confucian Qi Gong);
- Wu Gong[30] (Gong Fu Qi Gong or boxing Qi Gong).

(2) Based on whether movement of the body extremities are required or not, there are:

- Jing Gong[31] (static Qi Gong);
- Dong Gong[32] (dynamic Qi Gong);
- An Mo Gong[33] (self-massage).

(3) Based on the body postures adopted while performing Qi Gong exercise, there are:

- Zhan Gong[34] (standing);
- Zuo Gong[35] (sitting);
- Wo Gong[36] (lying);
- Xing Gong[37] (walking).

(4) Based on the effectiveness of doing Qi Gong exercise, there are:

- Jian Shen Gong[38] (strengthening health);
- Bao Jian Gong[39] (treating diseases);
- Wai Qi Gong[40] (releasing the emitted Qi out of the body for treating diseases);
- Zhi Neng Gong[41] (increasing intelligence).

(5) Based on the characters of physical strength, Qi Gong can be divided into two types:

- Ying Gong[42] (Hard Qi Gong);
- Ruan Gong[43] (Soft Qi Gong)

Ying Gong (Hard Qi Gong), by directing Qi into certain parts of the body, will enable the practitioner to split bricks or bend thick iron bars with the hands, to resist a knife or sword thrust to the body, etc.

27,道家功. 28,佛家功. 29,儒家功. 30,武功. 31,靜功. 32,動功. 33,按摩功.
34,站功. 35,坐功. 36,卧功. 37,行功. 38,健身功. 39,保健功. 40,外氣功.
41,智能功. 42,硬功. 43,軟功.

Ying Gong (Hard Qi Gong) is commonly practised by Chinese martial arts. Ruan Gong (Soft Qi Gong) is the more common type which is adopted for fitness and healing purposes.

Above are the most common types of Qi Gong practised by people all over China today. Some people may practise one type and stay with it. Some people may begin with one type, then add other different type(s), or completely switch to another type. For beginners, it is better to choose a simple type of Qi Gong which is easy to learn, then gradually adapt a more advanced or demanding type. For elderly people, it is better to practise Jing Gong (static Qi Gong), and for the young ones, it is better to practise Dong Gong (dynamic Qi Gong). However, the majority of practitioners learn from their master(s) who will teach whatever they know. Often, a particular type of Qi Gong might be more prevalent than the others at a certain time and a certain place, then people will follow the trend. In general, what type of Qi Gong people choose is determined by many factors, such as age, sex, geography, current trend, one's emotional and physical condition, stage of illness, or matter of personal preference.

1.6 Difference between Qi Gong and Yoga[44]

Over the centuries, Chinese and Indian traditions have influenced each other. Qi Gong is created on the foundation of Chinese medicine, Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and martial art, while Yoga is created on the foundation of Indian Hinduism and Buddhism. By comparison, Yoga is more familiar to Westerners than is Qi Gong. This fact is due to many reasons, one of which, probably the most important one, is that historically China has been much isolated from the rest of the world, and during the last 100 years up to modern time (–1976), China had been tormented by many internal and external upheavals. During this devastating period, to survive as a creature became the only issue that concerned the nation and individual as well. On the other hand, in this period, particularly in the 60s, Yoga was introduced and practised in the West.

44. 瑜伽功.



An old painting of syncretism of Taoist, Confucian and Buddhist.

All the evidence indicates that two systems, Chinese Qi Gong and Indian Yoga, originated separately in legend thousands of years ago, and developed along totally different paths. For example, Chinese inscription on the subject of breathing exercises dates back to at least 6th century B.C., a period when Buddhism was still unknown in China. Following the introduction of Buddhism into China in 1st–3rd century A.D., Buddhist doctrines gradually influenced Chinese life, becoming one of the three major religions, i.e., Taoism[45], Buddhism[46] and Confucianism[47]. These three great religions cultivated China into a rich and distinctive culture as a "hundred flowers in a garden." They never replaced each other, instead, they promoted each other. In the development of Qi Gong, they inspired each other.

45,道教. 46,佛教. 47,儒教.

Both Yoga and Qi Gong systems share certain common points of principle which include theory and training techniques. For example, both systems apply similar training techniques:

- meditation, relaxation and mind concentration, such as images of some natural settings;
- breathing control or respiratory exercise, such as natural, deep breathing, particularly holding expiration;
- body posture, such as plain sitting.

Both systems strive to achieve good health and longevity. Both systems are simple and easy to learn, with no tools needed but the mind and body, and the will of persistence in practising.

However, there are some outstanding differences between the two systems, as are summarized as follows:

- on health issues, Qi Gong believes in "One's life–span totally depends upon oneself," which is different from Yoga;
- mechanisms of Qi Gong exercise are based on the theory of traditional Chinese medicine, such as the balance of Yin and Yang, meridians, Qi-cavities, the five elements, Zang Fu (the internal organs); which are different from Yoga;
- sensation and control of Qi are greatly emphasized in Qi Gong, but not in Yoga;
- the emitting Qi is the higher level of Qi Gong training, but is not in Yoga;
- self-massage is a part of Qi Gong, but not of Yoga.

On the contrary, Yoga much emphasizes:

- "purification" of the body inside and outside, and to achieve the pure consciousness;
- "cleansing" of the physical body;
- extreme stretching of the muscles, joints and spine, and bending exercises for physical agility;
- vegetarian diet as a part of Yoga.

CHAPTER TWO

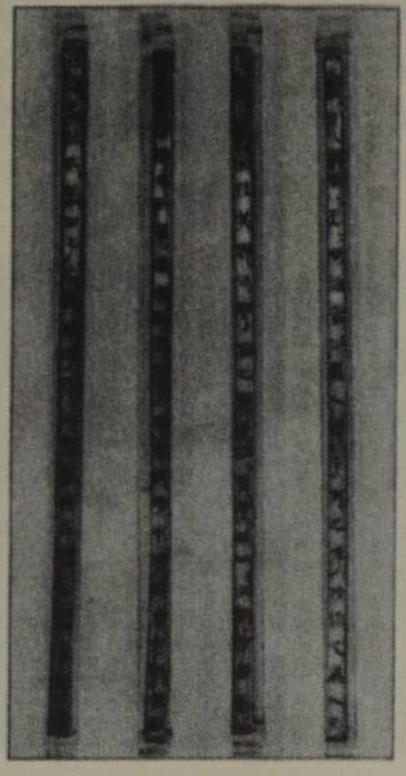
HISTORY OF QI GONG



Those who know others are wise;
those who know themselves are enlightened.

— Lao Zi (Lao Tzu) (6th century B.C.)

Traditional Chinese medicine can be traced back a long, long time. It is supposed to begin with the age of three founding fathers: Fu Hsi[1] (–2953 B.C.), Shen Nong[2], (–2838 B.C.) and Huang Di[3] who was the Yellow Emperor (–2598 B.C.). Some medical historians believe that events said to have occurred in the period prior to 1121 B.C. are interwoven with ancient myths, and they question the accuracy of these early accounts. After the period around 1121 B.C., there were significant changes in the Chinese medical system and in society as well, and historical records became more authentic.



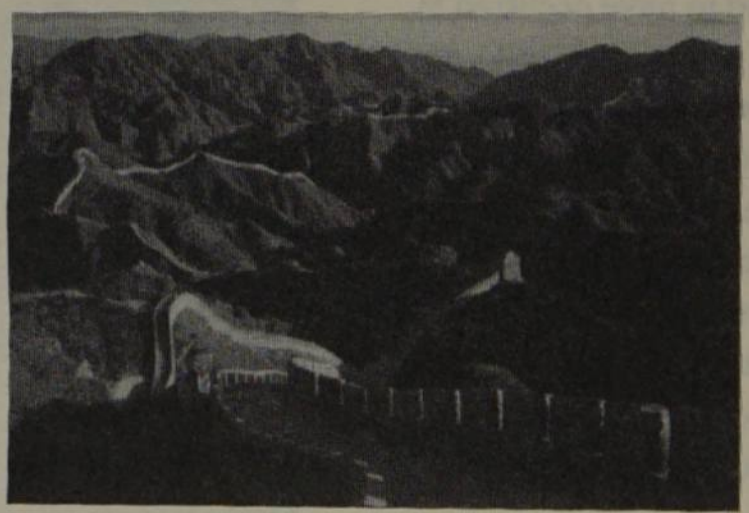
One of the earliest Qi Gong records.
Before paper was invented, writings were made on bamboo.

1,伏羲. 2,神農. 3,黃帝.

2.1 3000 Years Old

In general, Qi Gong has been developed together with traditional Chinese medicine. Chinese medicine emphasizes that prevention of disease is more important than treatment of disease. It was said, "The good doctor pays constant attention to keeping people well." Qi Gong has been a vital tool for preventing disease, keeping good health and promoting longevity, and thus became an integral part of traditional Chinese medicine.

Meanwhile, as in many other societies, particularly in ancient times, all matters including medicine were closely related to religion and philosophy. Taoism has had most influence on the early development of Qi Gong. Taoists, who lived in the temples or caves of remote, deep mountains, practised certain physiological exercises designed to prepare an "elixir" of life within the organs of the human body itself, which was known as Nei Dan[4] (inner elixir or physiological alchemy). It was believed that special self-training of mind and body could restore the fountains of youth and ultimately conquer death. As a result of these pursuits, or so they believed, Taoists generally lived longer than ordinary people, even if they could not exactly claim immortality.

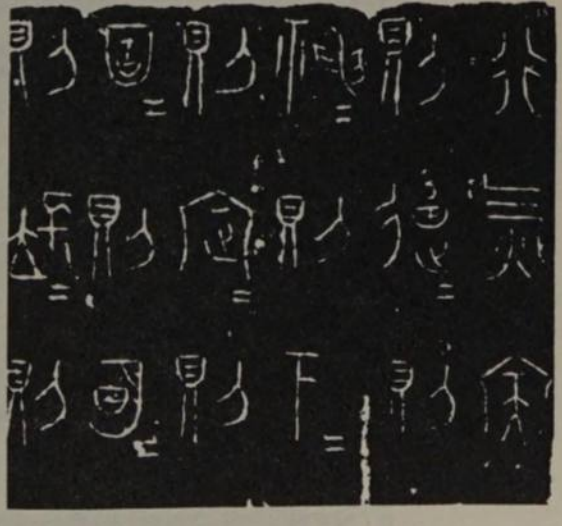


The Great Wall built thousands years ago.

4, 内丹.

During the course of the Zhou Dynasty (1100–221 B.C.), one of the most glorious periods in Chinese history, the country underwent profound changes, moving from the old system of slavery versus privilege towards a more enlightened, commercially oriented, rationally administrated society. These social transformations also cultivated the rise of many of the greatest Chinese philosophers and scholars, like Lao Tzu[5] (Lao Zi), Confucius[6] (Kong Fu Zi) and Mencius[7] (Meng Zi), three of China's greatest characters. They created a splendid intellectual environment, known as the "hundred schools of thought". Health and longevity were of especial interest. The principle of Yin and Yang flourished at its height. Qi Gong was taught and practised widely in the community and particularly by members of the imperial family. The archeological records of this period contained detailed writings on Qi Gong as inscriptions on various bronzes and other artifacts. For example, a description of Qi Gong theories and training methods, entitled "Jade Pendant Inscription on Qi Gong", was engraved on a 12-sided cylinder found among the unearthed historical relics of Zhou Dynasty (6th century B.C.). This inscription clearly captures the essence of Qi Gong; it reads as follows:

In breathing and moving Qi, one holds breathing deeply and it is stored. If it is stored it expands. When it expands it descends. When it descends it becomes stable. When it becomes stable it will solidify. When it converts solidity it will begin to sprout. After it has sprouted it will grow. When it grows it will retreat. When it retreats it will reach the heaven. Heavenly Qi functions from above and earthly Qi functions from below. Conformity to this leads to life while adverseness to this leads to death.



A section of "Jade Pendant Inscription on Qi Gong".

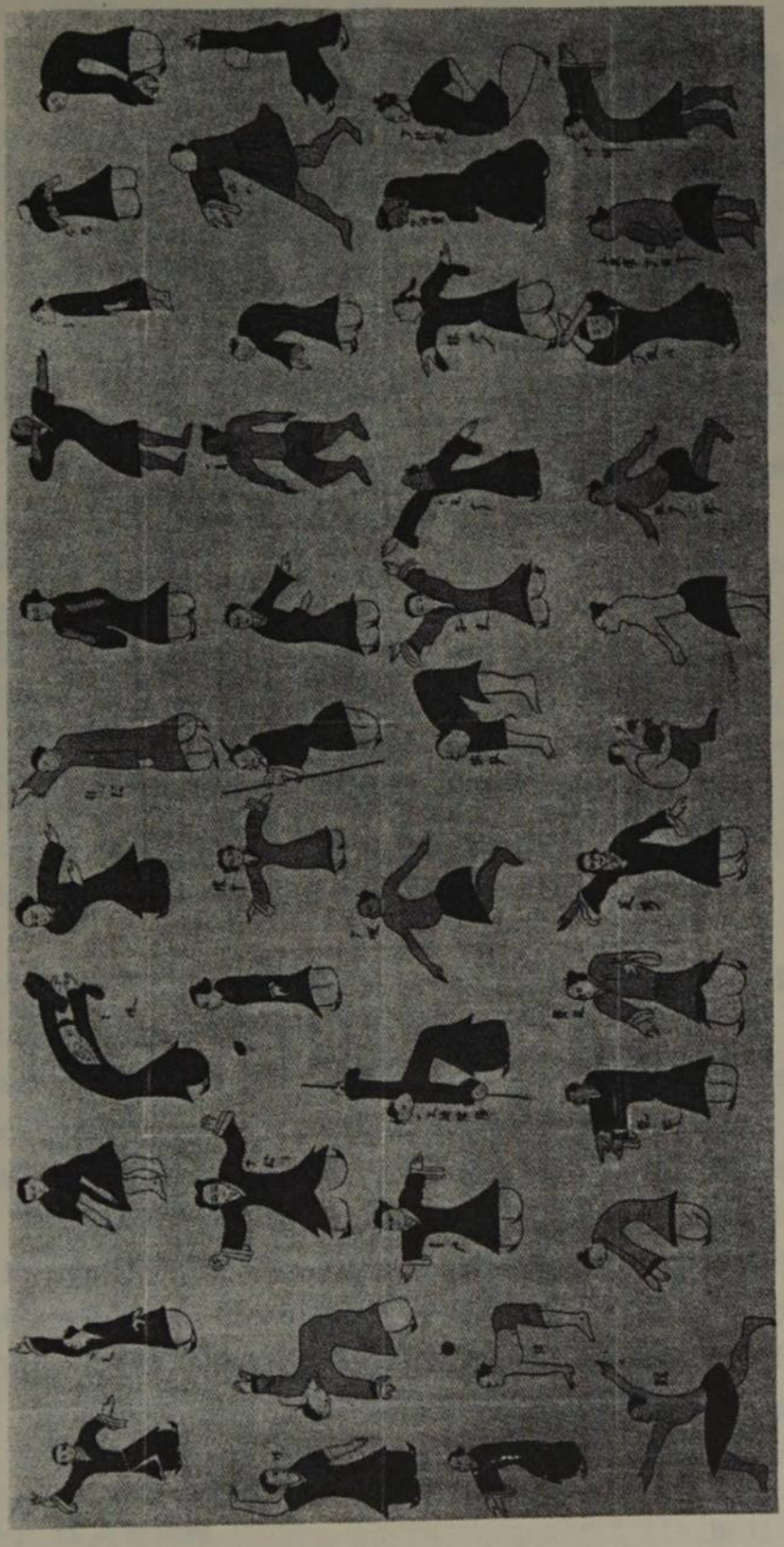
5.老子. 6.孔夫子. 7.孟子.

One of the most famous archeological excavations was the Han Tomb No. 3 at Mawangdui[8]. Among many items on traditional medicine, there are a silk book entitled "On Abandoning Food and Living on Qi" and a silk painting entitled "Dao Yin[9] Illustrations", which are related to Qi Gong exercise. The former describes a Qi Gong method of "inducing, promoting and conducting Qi", and the latter displays 44 human figures with different postures and short captions drawn in black lines and painted in color. These relics date back at least to the early Western Han Dynasty period (206 B.C.– 8 A.D.).



Figures from the "Dao Yin Illustrations".

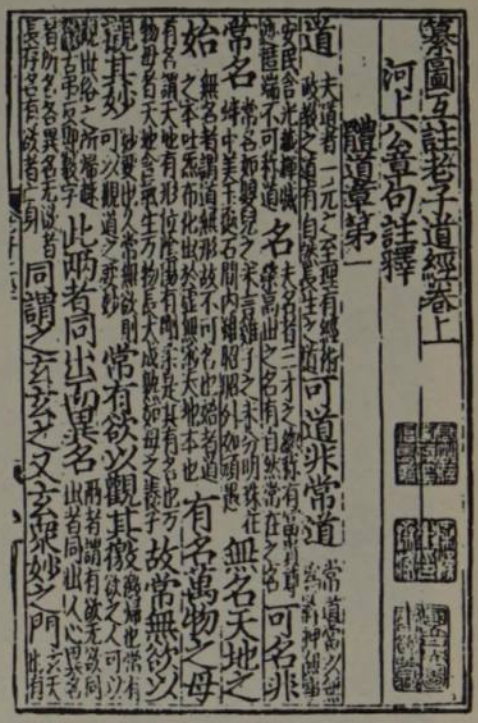
8, 馬王堆. Two Han tombs were excavated in east outslirts of Changsha, the capital city of Hunan province, 1972-1973. 9, 導引.



The restored complete figures of the "Dao Yin Illustrations".



An old drawing of Lao Tzu.



A page of "Dao De Jing" from one of old editions.

Lao Tzu (Lao Zi), the founder of Taoism, wrote a book titled "Dao De Jing"[10] (Canon of the Dao (Tao) and its virtue). Literally, Tao[11] (Dao) means "the way"; De means "virtue"; and Jing means "canon". Several chapters in the book describe some principles of Qi Gong exercise and training techniques, like "returning to the state of infancy", "breathing like the fetus in the mother's abdomen". The book was regarded as the beginning of physiological alchemy. Legend has it that he was born from an opening cut under his mother's armpit, after a period of seventy-two years gestation. At his birth, his hair was already white with age and he was called accordingly, Lao Tzu, "the old boy".

10, 道德經. 11, 道.

the old breath and taking in new,

passing time like the dormant bear, and stretching;

and twisting the neck like a bird;

– all these merely show the desire for longevity.

Huang Di Nei Jing[13] (The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine) is the greatest Chinese medical classic ever written. Compiled between 500–300 B.C. by several physicians, it summarized the theoretical and practical knowledge of prior centuries. In thirty-six volumes, its contents covered almost all the subjects in traditional Chinese medicine, such as the theories of Yin-Yang, the Five Elements, Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera), Jing Luo (the channels and collaterals or meridians), Qi and blood, pulse indication, ethology, anatomical speculation, pathology, diagnostic methods, differentiation of syndromes, acupuncture, moxibustion, Qi Gong, etc. Several chapters in the book were devoted to Qi Gong. Some passages read as follows:

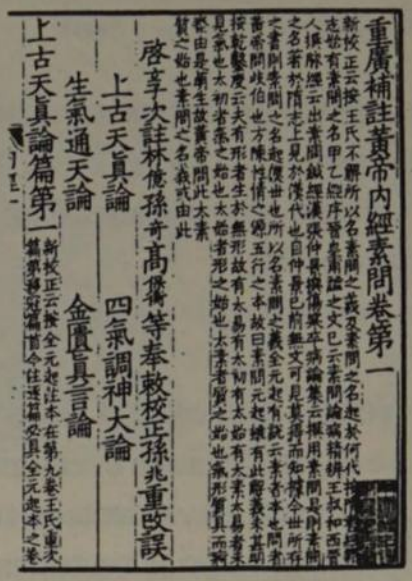
Breathing with essence of Qi, concentrating with mind, incorporating muscle and flesh as one.

Keeping nonchalant and void, then genuine Qi will be around;

keeping a sound mind, then diseases will vanish.

Patients who suffer from chronic kidney diseases shall face the south from 3 till 5 clock in the morning, concentrating the mind without any stray thoughts, holding the breath without respiration seven times, inhaling air by slightly craning the neck as swallowing a hard object, repeating this seven times, gulping down plenty of sublingual saliva.

12.莊子. 13.黃帝內經.


重廣補註黃帝內經素問卷第一

新校正云按王氏不解所以名素問之義及素問之名起於何代按阮氏志始有素問之名甲乙經序皆皇甫謐之文已云素問鍼經漢張仲景撰傷寒卒病論集云撰用素問是則素問之名著於隋志上見於漢代也自仲景已前無文可見莫得而知故今世所存之書則素問之名起僞世也所以名素問之義全元起有說云素者本也問者審問疾伯也方陳性情之源五行之本故曰素問元起雖有此解義未其明按靈樞經云夫有形者生於無形故有太易有太初有太始有太素太易者未見氣也太初者氣之始也太始者形之始也太素者質之始也氣形質具而萬物由是滋生故黃帝問此太素質之始也素問之名義或由此

啓玄次註林億孫奇高保衡等奉敕校正孫兆重改誤

上古天眞論　四氣調神大論

生氣通天論　金匱眞言論

上古天眞論篇第一　新校正云按全元起注本在第九卷王氏重次篇第移冠篇首今往往篇必具全元起本之卷

A page of "Huang Di Nei Jing".

From this time onwards throughout ancient Chinese history, descriptions of principles, theories, training methods of Qi Gong and the effects of Qi Gong, as part of preventive medicine, are to be found in almost all the famous Chinese medical texts. There are thousands and only some of them are listed in the Bibliography.

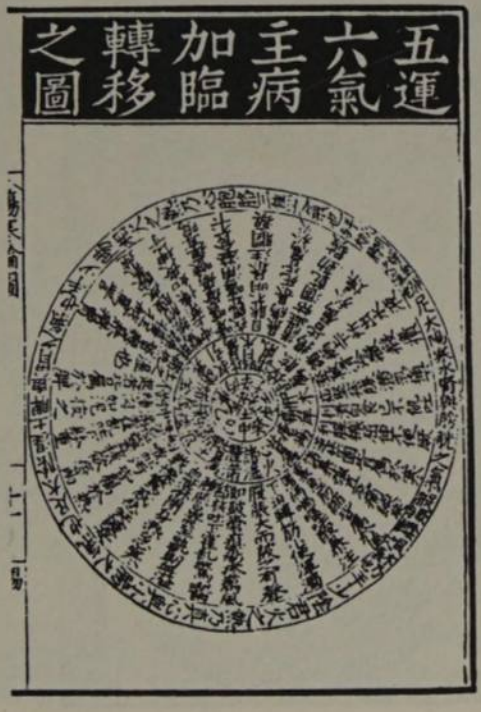
2.2 Major Schools of Qi Gong

In the long course of development back over thousands of years, Qi Gong was originated by the thoughts and ideas of the ancient Chinese medical scholars, philosophers, sages and Taoists, for the purpose of "warding off disease and prolonging life", and for finding the elixirs of life and the secret of immortality. Later on, it was influenced and cultivated by the doctrines of Confucians and warriors. After the introduction of Buddhism into China in 1st–3rd century, the Buddhist doctrines also played an important role in the development of Qi Gong. Various schools and divisions have been established. Each has its own unique theory and training methods, but many of them overlap each other. The following are the major schools of Chinese Qi Gong in which each has own systematic theory and training tactics.

2.2.1 Yi Jia Gong[14] (Medical Qi Gong)

This was initiated and developed by medical scholars, based on theories of traditional Chinese medicine, i.e., the meridian system, Qi-cavity or acupoint, the principle of Yin and Yang, the interaction of the Five Elements, Zang Fu (the internal organs), and the relation of three vitalities (Jing[15], Qi, Shen[16]). The goal is to keep good health, prevent and cure illness. The exercises were performed according to the condition of the practitioner, balance of Yin and Yang, coordination of organs etc. The training methods include Jing Gong[17] (static Qi Gong), Dong Gong[18] (dynamic Qi Gong) and An Mo Gong[19] (self-massage). There were many different types of Yi Jia Gong. In addition, it was often combined with other medical techniques, like acupuncture, herbs and moxibustion for treating various kinds of disease.

The essence of Yi Jia Gong is to keep the balance of Qi in the body.



An old illustration of relation between Qi and diseases.

14, 醫家功. 15, 精. 16, 神. 17, 靜功. 18, 動功. 19, 按摩功.

2.2.2 Dao Jia Gong[20] (Taoist Qi Gong)

Taoism has been one of the chief religions from ancient China. Dao Jia Gong was initiated and developed by Tao's (Dao's) priests, based on the principles of self-physiological alchemy, the theory of Ba Gua[21] system (eight diagrams) and the microcosm of the universe. The goal is to search for the elixirs of life, the fountains of perpetual youth and the secrets of immortality. The exercise was focused on the cultivation of "Nei Dan[22]" (the inner elixir), by generating and storing Qi in the area of Dan Tian[23] (the elixir field), i.e., the area of lower abdomen below the navel, and also on the cultivation of Taoist sexuality because sex was a part of alchemy. The training methods included Jing Gong (static Qi Gong), Dong Gong (dynamic Qi Gong) and Yu Fang Gong[24] (jade chamber Qi Gong, which is not discussed in this book).

The essence of Dao Jia Gong is to preserve, enrich and recast Qi in the body.



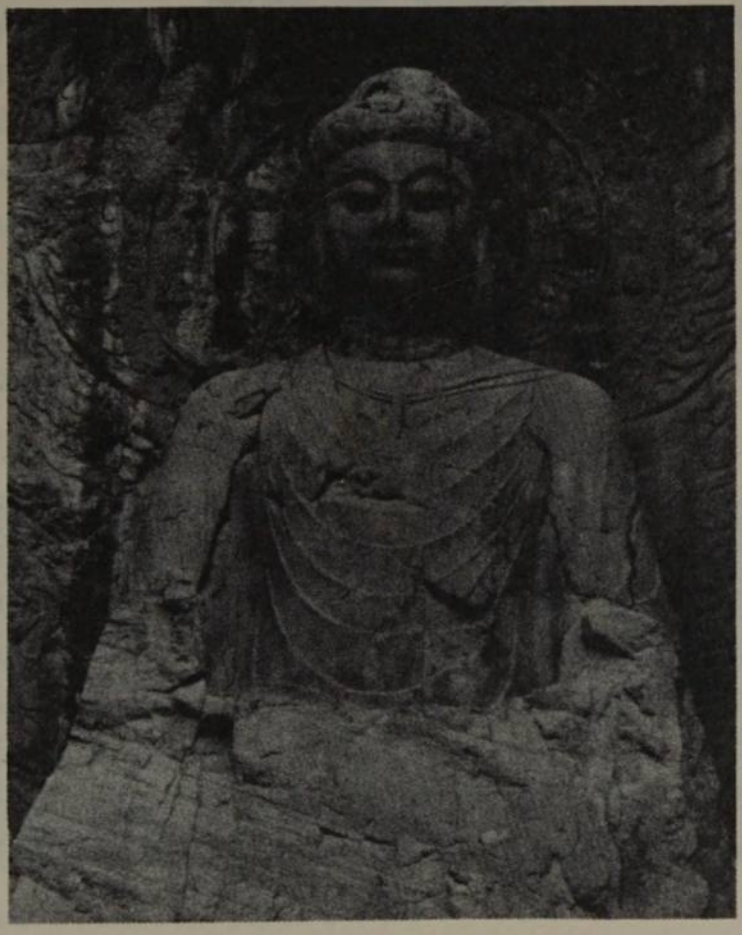
An old diagram of alchemy.

20,道家功. 21,八卦. 22,内丹. 23,丹田. 24,玉房功.

2.2.3 Fo Jia Gong[25] (Buddhist Qi Gong)

Buddhism introduced from India in 1st-3rd century also became one of the chief religions in China. Fo Jia Gong developed by Buddhists was based on the wisdom of liberation from reincarnation and self-observation. The goal is to search for the perfection (or purity) of mind, eternal life in the midst of time, and ultimately the union of the individual with the universe or the pure consciousness. The exercise was focused on the art of meditation and mental repose as known "a sound mind in a sound body". The training methods were chiefly involved in Jing Gong[26] (static Qi Gong).

The essence of Fo Jia Gong is to gain self-purification with Qi in the body.



An old statue of the Buddha Vairocana.

25, 佛家功. 26, 靜功.



An old painting of Confucius.

2.2.4 Ru Jia Gong[27] (Confucian Qi Gong)

Confucianism too became a major religion in China. It was founded on the philosophy of Confucius, one of the greatest of all Chinese scholars. Ru Jia Gong was developed in the Confucian school, based on the tenet that "A healthy family, a healthy country, a healthy world, all arise from a single superior person." The goal of exercise is to train "the superior person" to have the virtues and the moral characters of kindness, tolerance, loyalty and comprehension. The exercise was focused on the cultivation of quietude in mind and body and their coordination. The training methods were chiefly Jing Gong (static Qi Gong).

The essence of Ru Jia Gong is to cultivate personal moral virtue with Qi.

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27. 儒家功.

2.2.5 Wu Gong[28] (Boxing Qi Gong)

Chinese martial art (Gong Fu[29] or Kung Fu, as Chinese often call it Wu Shu[30]) itself dates back at least 4000 years. However, later, many types of the martial art became integrated with Qi Gong, and named Wu Gong, which was based on the principle that Qi would enhance the strength and efficiency of the muscles, bones and joints primarily through the promotion of Zang Fu (the internal organs), known as the internal power or internal Qi, and further that application of emitting Qi could directly attack the opponent, known as Dian Xue (Tien Hsueh or Dim Mark). The goal of Wu Gong exercise is to gain the mental strength, and meanwhile to achieve powerful physical strength with internal softness and speedy body movement with internal stillness, as it was said "Balance of the hardness and softness" or "Balance of the outside and inside", and also to achieve the body being capable of emitting Qi as a penetrating force. The exercise was emphasized on self-discipline, strictness, hardship, mental and physical strength, internal softness and slowness, and emitting Qi. The training methods involve Dong Gong (dynamic Qi Gong), Jing Gong (static Qi Gong) and An Mo Gong (self-massage).

The essence of Wu Gong is to enhance the internal and physical constitution of the body with Qi.



Gong Fu (Kung Fu) is popular in China.

28.武功. 29.功夫. 30.武術.

2.3 Early Techniques of Qi Gong

In very early times, there were various forms of exercises, and many of them were unconnected. Later they were gradually integrated, systematized and refined, and eventually evolved into the types recognized under the general name – Qi Gong. It is necessary to know the origin and discrepancy of these early important techniques in order to better understand Qi Gong as a whole.

2.3.1 Dao Yin[31] (Guiding)

The term "Dao Yin" literally means "guiding". In ancient Chinese philosophy, it was believed that every matter in nature is in a state of constant change or in a pattern of circular motion.

The sun rises and sets.
The moon waxes and wanes.
The flower blossoms and fades.
And the tide comes and goes.

Between man and the nature, climatic changes have strong influences on us, and even control many aspects of our lives. The functions of the four seasons, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, are summarized as follows:

Spring rules birth.
Summer rules growth.
Autumn rules gathering.
Winter rules storage.

Traditional Chinese medicine explains that the changes of the four seasons will bring with them six pathogenetic conditions: the wind, cold, heat, dampness, dryness and fire. These changes in our surroundings inevitably influence the balance of Qi in the body, and disturb the state of mind and body, which will lead to weakness of the body and being susceptible to disease.

31, 導引.

For example:

- The wind can cause stroke.
- The cold can cause diarrhea.
- The heat can cause headache.
- The dampness can cause tumors.
- The dryness can cause sore throats.
- The fire can cause heat-strokes.

In order to withstand or keep in balance and harmony with the changes in the environment, systemic physical movements are necessary. These are thought to be able to guide the mind and body through the changes in nature, as is said:

The used doorstep never rots, the flowing water never becomes putrid, so does the body.

Exercise expels the bad air in the system.

If the mind and body are guided by exercises like the bear's neck, the fowl's twist, swaying the body and moving the joints, the functions of the Zang Fu (the internal organs) as well as the whole body are adjusted and enhanced in a timely and appropriate manner.

According to the book, "Bao Puzi's Inner Treaties", by a renowned physician, Ge Hong[32], in 4th century, methods of Dao Yin (guiding) should be diversified as follows:

Flexing or stretching,
bending or up-facing,
walking or lying,
leaning or standing,
pacing or strolling,
chanting or breathing,
— these are all methods of Dao Yin.

32. 葛洪.



Old drawings of the "Five Animal Play".

Some earliest forms of the physical movements were designed by mimicking the movements and gestures of animals, as a sort of dance movement, such as "the Five Animal Play[33]" (the tiger, the bear, the deer, the ape and the bird), the crane or the turtle. In addition, the deer, the crane and the turtle have long life and are the symbols of longevity in Chinese.

Traditional Chinese medicine believed that harmful effects of changes, like wind as Xie Qi[34] (the malign Qi), could enter the meridians through the skin, and the internal Qi would be blocked, resulting in disease. The exercises imitating animal movements guide Qi in the circulation, and direct the flow of Qi to resist and expel all Xie Qi (the malign Qi).

2.3.2 Tu Na[35] (Breathing in and out)

The term "Tu Na" literally means "breathe the old out and the new in". Probably, it was Taoist priests that first practised Tu Na, as the "internal exercise". This internal exercise can connect or channel between the mind-body and "eternal life", so that inner immortality can be achieved. From early on, breathing exercises were important techniques. When air (Da Qi[36]) is exhaled, the internal Qi would be moving up from Dan Tian, known as expiration of Qi; when air (Da Qi) was inhaled, the internal Qi would be moving downwards in the

33,五禽戲. 34,邪氣. 35,吐納. 36,大氣.

meridians, as known inspiration of Qi. So it was believed that respiration could produce, direct, prompt Qi and serve as the "respiratory therapy".

The routine for training breath was that air should be inhaled through the nose, retained as long as possible and then exhaled through the nose or the mouth. This basic training procedure was learned from the divers who collected pearls in the sea. Also, it was to train one's breathing like a fetus breathing in the womb slowly and quietly, etc.

2.3.3 An Mo[37] (Massage)

The term "An Mo or An Jiao[38]" literally means "massage". When we are hurt, as a human instinct, we involuntarily put our hands to the painful spot and rub it in order to alleviate the pain. In traditional Chinese medicine, as early as the Stone Age, it was found that pressing certain points on the body helped to alleviate pain that originated far away from the points and obtain some beneficial effects on certain ailments.



An old drawing of An Mo.

37,按摩. 38,按跤.

An Mo is often performed by the trainer self, and works primarily through the meridian system of the body, by rubbing and pressing the Qi-cavities (acupoints) along the meridians, as said in one of the old literatures as "Concentrating Qi, pushing the Qi-cavities along the meridians", and therefore this technique is also called the "Meridian Self-Massage". The massage can cover a selected area of the body from the head, face, waist, chest, abdomen and limbs, involving the twelve meridians and extra-ones, in turn, many of which correspond to Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera). By dredging the meridians, Qi can be stirred up, moved and regulated. On the other hand, Qi can be sedated, so that the balance of Qi can be reestablished, the body can be strengthened, and the visceral function can be adjusted and promoted. In particular, when illness occurs, it is due to the Qi being blocked, and massage helps dissolve the blocked Qi and induce flowing of Qi. Once the meridians become unobstructed, the ailment will relieve itself. An Mo is an important discipline of traditional Chinese medicine.

From early on, the meridian self-massage was a part of Qi Gong exercise, known as An Mo Gong[39]. It exerts a special dynamic force for assistance in activating and moving Qi in the meridians, a way of regulation of Qi. The early forms of An Mo Gong included:

- head tapping,
- eye pressing,
- ear guiding,
- hair raising,
- face dry-bathing,
- limb rubbing,
- and body touching.

2.3.4 Tun Tuo[40] (Swallowing the Saliva)

The term "Tun Tuo" literally means "swallowing the saliva". In Taoism, as a part of their physiological alchemy, it was important to

39.按摩功. 40.吞唾.

engage in activation and conservation of certain secretions of the body. The saliva was one of them, which was regarded as the "jade juice", "jade water" or "metallous fluid", containing some vitality. Therefore, spitting out the saliva must at all cost be avoided. Gnashing the teeth was deemed most effective in activating secretion of saliva, and it helped circulate Qi in the body, forming a system as known as "The jade water irrigates the Qi."

It is recognized that the saliva is the secretion from the Qi-cavities underneath the tongue, a place known as "the jade spring". Physiological significance of swallowing the saliva was evident in most Chinese medical classics, as one said, "Rinsing and swallowing the saliva puts a man beyond the reach of calamities."

2.3.5 Shou Shen[41] (Controlling the Spirit)

The term "Shou Shen" literally means "controlling the spirit". In traditional Chinese medicine, the spirit also means the "Thought" and "Mind". Emotional activities are considered to be the function of mind and spirit, which dominates the activities of all organs in the body. To regulate the function of any organ effectively, the emotional activities should be regulated and controlled first. There are seven emotions: joy, anger, anxiety, desire, sorrow, horror and fear. Each emotion, if it becomes excessive and not regulated in a proper manner, can disturb the mind and upset the balance of Yin and Yang. Then, disease may occur, for example:

- Too much joy can injure the heart and blood vessels.
- Too serious anger can injure the liver.
- Too high desire can injure the spleen.
- Too deep sorrow can injure the lungs.

These unbalanced emotions were called the "evil emotions". It was believed that by concentration of mind or controlling the spirit the evil emotions would be distracted or avoided, thus Qi could be guarded.

41. 守神.

Various theories and methods of Shou Shen have been practised, but to sum up, there are basically two ways:

- the method of mental concentration, i.e., concentrating the mind or the will on a certain point or area of one's own body intentionally and constantly;
- the method of deep meditation, i.e., dismissing all distracting thoughts, but meantime not falling asleep.

It is widely recognized that the Shou Shen is the most important technique of the whole Qi Gong exercises, as known "A sound mind, then a sound body."

CHAPTER THREE

ESSENTIAL DISCIPLINES



The fruit of good fortune grows
from the seed of good conduct.

— I Ching (Yi Jing) (24th century B.C.)

The essence of Qi Gong exercise training is to integrate the functions of the mind and body. Although there are many different types of Qi Gong exercises, they basically consist of four essential disciplines:

- management of body posture[1];
- management of breath[2];
- management of mind[3];
- management of self-massage[4].

Management of mind is the core of Qi Gong and also is the most demanding discipline. Breathing is instrumental in inducing and promoting Qi. Certain adopted body postures can assist in the training. Self-massage is an important part of manipulating, moving and directing Qi. They depend on each other, as it is said, "Body posture supports breathing, breathing nourishes mind, mind reinforces body posture." "Self-massage moves Qi , so does the mind." Thus, only a close combination and coordination of these four elements in Qi Gong training will guarantee a fruitful result.

1,調身. 2,調息. 3,調心. 4,調摩.

3.1 Management of Body Posture

Body posture is the "external exercise of Qi Gong". Two points need attention in management of the body posture. One is that the body should not be forced into an uncomfortable position whether it is in standing, sitting, lying, or walking, etc. The other is that body movements shall not be intense physically, as the exercise is emphasized not to overdo in any way. Correct postures are preconditions of effective Qi Gong training. It is said:

> *If there is not correct posture, there will be not smooth flow of Qi; if there is not smooth flow of Qi , there will be not concentrated mind; if there is not concentrated mind, there will be disorderly Qi.*

There are a variety of body postures and body movements. Each person should adopt the one that best suits him or her. The following are the most commonly used body postures and movements.



(a) (b)

Figure 3.1

3.1.1 Standing Postures

(1) Natural Standing: Stand upright with feet flat, parallel and spaced to your own shoulder width. Bear the body weight evenly on

both feet. Bend the knees slightly. Raise the heels slightly to set the center of gravity of whole body on the front part of the feet. Keep the spine straight and pull the abdomen inward slightly. Relax the shoulder joints to let both shoulders, arms and hands droop naturally with the elbows bent slightly. Set the fingers spread and curved naturally. Keep the head upright and look forward horizontally with the eyes closed or the eyelids half closed. See Figure 3.1a,b.

(2) Ball-Pressing Standing: While maintaining the posture of natural standing, raise both hands up to the chest level, keeping them the chest width apart, the arms presenting an embracing gesture with the five fingers of each hand separated and bent slightly, and the palms facing the ground as if pressing a big floating ball into water. See Figure 3.2a,b.

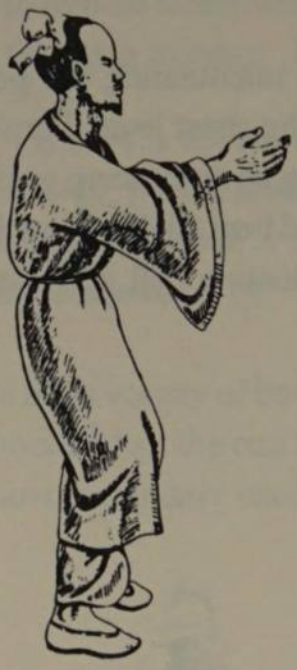


(a) (b)

Figure 3.2



(a)



(b)

Figure 3.3

(3) Ball-Holding Standing: Still maintaining the posture of natural standing, move both hands up to the chest level with the palms facing the chest about one foot apart, the arms presenting an embracing gesture with the five fingers of each hand separated and bent slightly as if holding a big ball, and the fingertips of one hand pointing at those of the other, with about 12 inches between the tips of the two middle fingers. See Figure 3.3a,b.

3.1.2 Sitting Postures

(1) Plain Sitting: Sit up straight on a chair or a stool and keep the feet parallel and placed firmly on the floor, the knees separated shoulder-width apart. Relax the shoulders and let the elbows bend naturally. Place the hands naturally on the knees (Figure 3.4a,b), or clench fists slightly (Figure 3.4c), or put one hand (palm facing downward) on top of the other (palm upward) and place them on the lower part of the abdomen (Figure 3.4d).

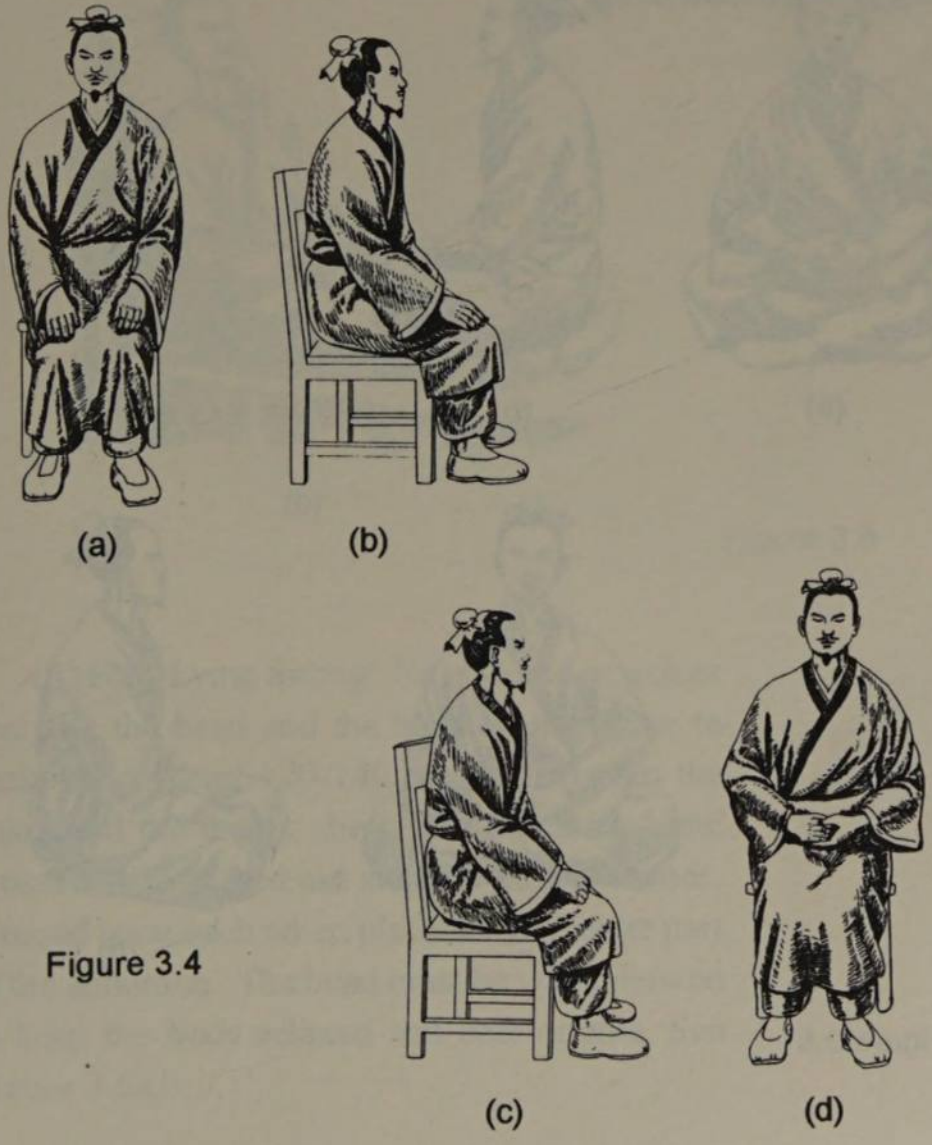


Figure 3.4

(2) Leg-Crossing Sitting: There are two forms of leg-crossing sitting. One is called the "single crossing sitting", which means sitting with one leg folded under the other, the hands crossed on each other and placed on the lower part of the abdomen (Figure 3.5a), or placed on the thighs (Figure 3.5b). The other is called the "double crossing sitting", which means sitting with the two feet folded to face each other on the medial aspects of the thighs with both soles facing upwards, and the hands crossed one upon the other and placed upon the lower part of the abdomen (Figure 3.5c.d).

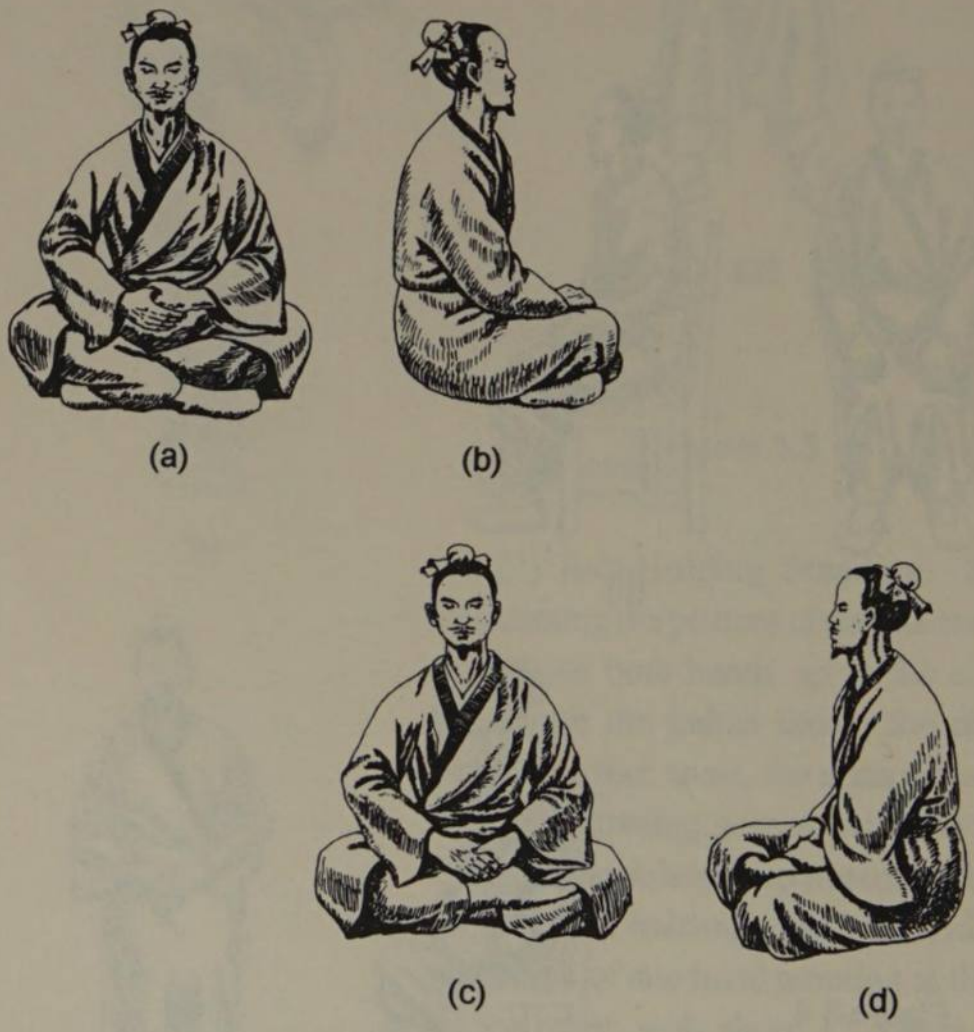
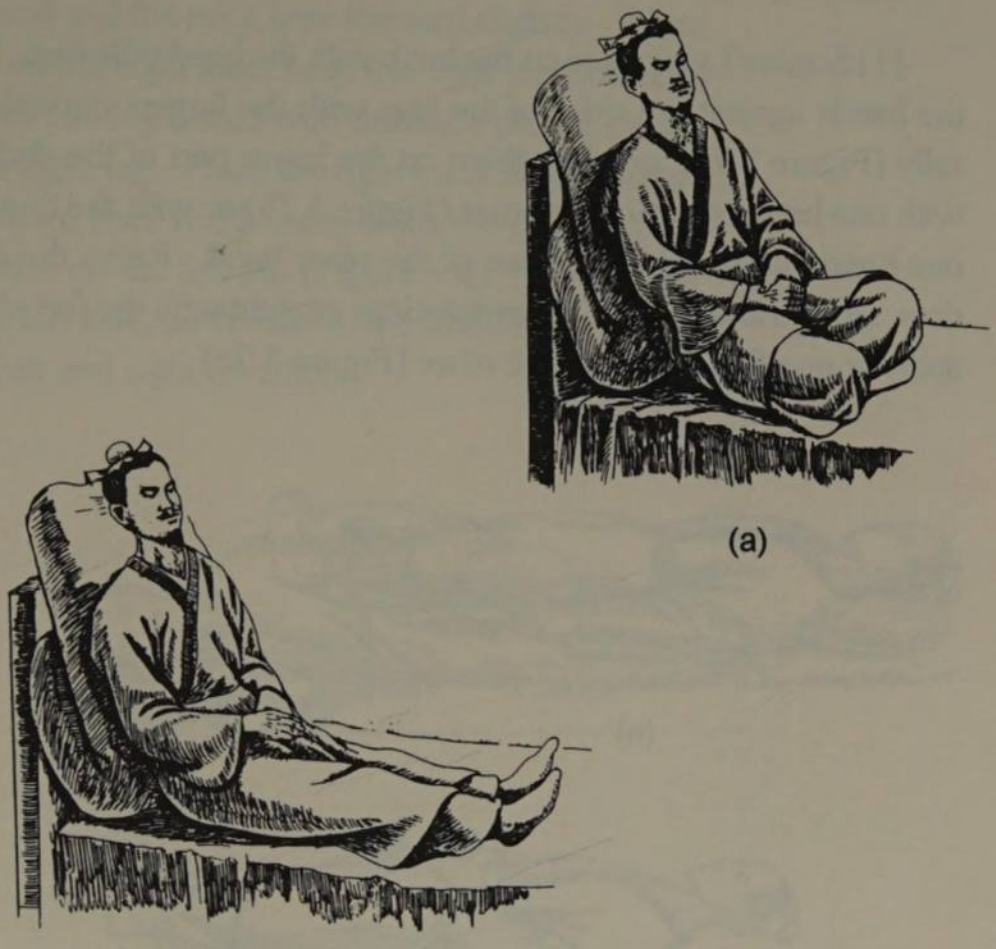


Figure 3.5



(a)

(b)

Figure 3.6

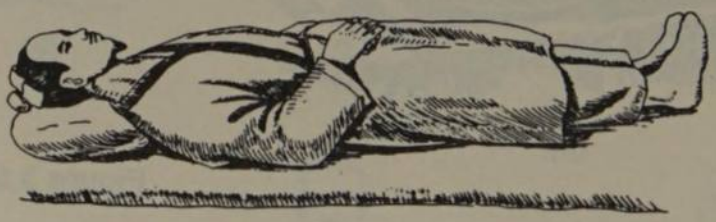
(3) Half-Lying Sitting: Sit on a bed or a chair and rest the head and the back on a cushion to make an angle of 120-140 degrees between the trunk and the thighs, the legs either folded and crossed or stretched out straight with the hands, crossed upon each other, placed on the lower part of the abdomen. The head must be well pillowed to keep the body relaxed and comfortable. See Figure 3.6a,b.

3.1.3 Lying Postures

(1) Supine Lying: Lie on the back with the head pillowed. Place the hands against the sides of the legs with the fingers curved naturally (Figure 3.7a), or place them on the lower part of the abdomen with one hand on top of the other (Figure 3.7b) or with the fingers of one hand interlaced with those of the other hand. Relax the shoulders, elbows and wrists. Extend the legs straight with the feet slightly apart or one foot on top of the other (Figure 3.7c).



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 3.7

(2) Latericumbent Lying: Lie on one side of the body (preferably on the right side) with the head pillowed and the neck bent forward slightly. When lying on the right side, keep the right leg extended and the left leg flexed with the knee placed on top of the right leg. Place the right hand on the pillow about two fists width away from the face and the left hand on the left hip (Figure 3.8). When lying on the left side, do the same as described above but with left and right reversed.



Figure 3.8

3.1.4 Walking Postures

Assume the natural standing for 2-3 minutes, then shift the body weight onto the right foot and step out with the heel of left foot first touching the ground, the upper part of body and the hands swinging to the right. Meanwhile, inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. When the left foot fully touches the ground with the body weight shifted onto it, take the right foot one step forward with the heel first touching the ground, the upper part of body and the hands swinging to the left, inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Walk forward step by step as described above and end the exercise after walking for about 10-30 minutes or longer.

3.1.5 Dynamic Postures

Various forms of dynamic postures (body movements), mostly in a series of sets, are practised with different parts of the body including the head, neck, and limbs. For some detailed sets see Chapter six. Many dynamic postures imitate the postures and movements of animals, such as "the Five Animal Play[5]". Some imitate the movements of tortoises and cranes. Some movements are incorporated with other forms of Chinese physical exercises, such as Tai Ji Quan[6]. As a whole, dynamic postures are beneficial in particular for functional activity of muscles, joints and bones, and for improvement of blood circulation.



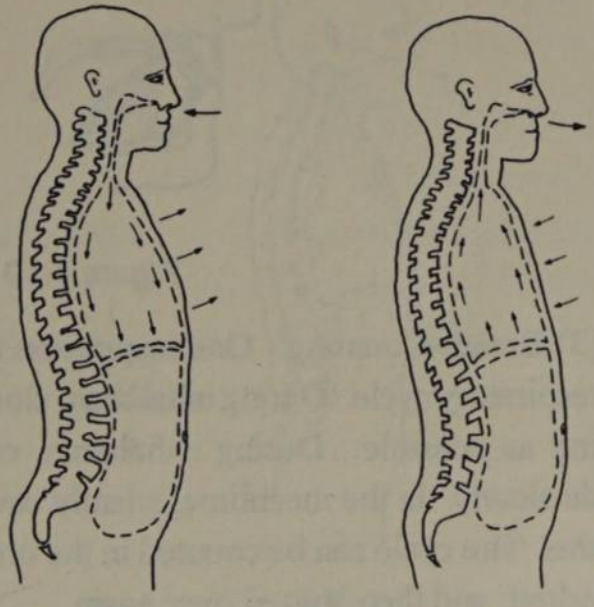
An old Chinese drawing of man, animal and nature.

5,五禽戲. 6,太極拳.

3.2 Management of Breath

In traditional Chinese medicine, the air is considered as a mixture of Qi and gases, known as Da Qi[7]. Certain special breathing methods are required in order to achieve better absorbtion of Da Qi, better transformation of Da Qi into the internal Qi(s), and better coordination with mind concentration. It is believed that many different Qi(s) in the body, such as Zhen Qi[8], Ying Qi[9], Wei Qi[10], etc., which carry out different functions, travel to the lungs where refreshment and reinforcement of Qi(s) take place, and where internal Qi(s) communicate with the external world, known as the "Heaven Qi". Therefore, training of breathing is of great importance for bringing the functions of all kinds of Qi into full play. In addition, certain breathing exercises are believed to contribute some therapeutic values.

In general, in Qi Gong exercises, inhalation should take place only through the nose. Breathing through the nose works primarily via the diaphragm (Figure 3.9a,b), while the majority of people today use shallow chest breathing. All breathing exercises should be as quiet as possible, and should not be audible to the practitioner. The following are the breathing training methods which are commonly adopted in Qi Gong exercises.



(a) (b)

Figure 3.9

7,大氣. 8,真氣. 9,營氣. 10,衛氣.

3.2.1 Quiet Respiration

(1) Natural Breathing: Do not pay any special attention to the breath at all. Let breathing proceed naturally, along with the relaxation of the entire body and the dismissal of distracting and bothering thoughts. The breath will gradually become smooth, gentle, even, deep and without straining.

(2) Long Breathing: On the basis of natural breathing, increase the depth and slow down the frequency of respiration, and prolong the duration of the cycles gradually. During inhalation, close the lips, raise the tip of the tongue against the upper inner aspect of the teeth (Figure 3.10), and then hold the breath for a little while before exhalation. During exhalation, open the lips slightly and exhale slowly through the mouth. Again hold the breath for a little while before the next inhalation.

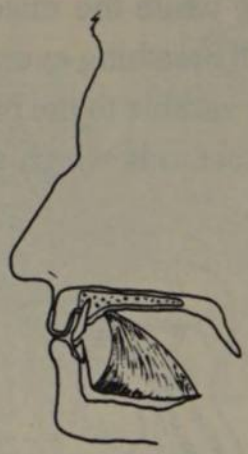


Figure 3.10

(3) Breath-Counting: One inspiration and one expiration make one respiratory cycle. During inhalation, close the lips, hold the breath as long as possible. During exhalation, open the lips slightly and exhale slowly. In the meantime, silently count how many cycles you breathe. The cycle can be counted in the order of one to ten or one to a hundred, and then started over again.

3.2.2 Abdominal Respiration

The method of abdominal respiration is to breathe primarily by movement of the diaphragm, which descends during inspiration and ascends during expiration. Meanwhile, the movements of the diaphragm cause a corresponding displacement of the abdominal viscera. Thus, it is believed that this training method is especially helpful for its massage effect on Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera), and in turn, their functions can be regulated and enhanced greatly.

(1) Orthodromic Breathing: During inhalation, close the lips and keep the body of the tongue close to the hard palate with its tip against the upper inner aspects of the front teeth. Concentrate the mind on the Dan Tian area (located on the abdominal midline about 2 inches below the umbilicus), inhale slowly with the descent of the diaphragm and bulge of the lower part of the abdomen, and at the same time, mentally guide Qi to the Dan Tian. Then, hold the breath for a little while. After that, exhale slowly with the ascent of the diaphragm and pull in the lower part of the abdomen. See Figure 3.11a,b.

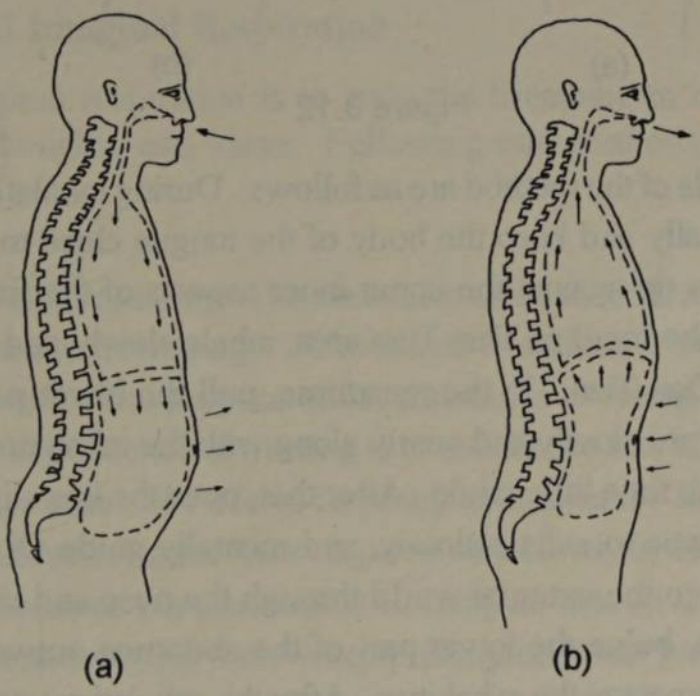


Figure 3.11

(2) Antidromic Breathing: The difference between this method and the method of orthodromic breathing is in the manner or direction of movement of the abdomen. In this training method, the lower part of the abdomen is pulled inward during inhalation and bulged outward during exhalation.

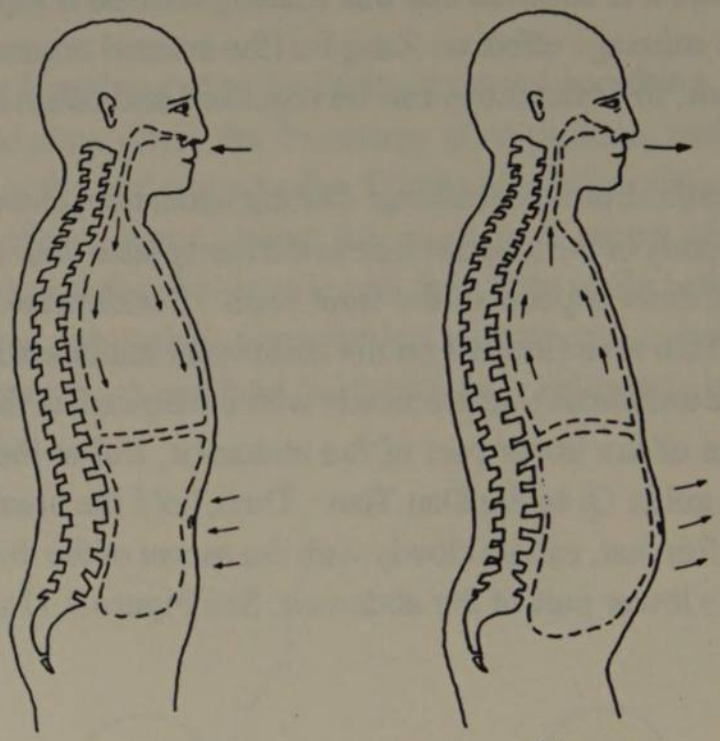


Figure 3.12

The details of the method are as follows: During inhalation, close the lips naturally and keep the body of the tongue close to the hard palate with its tip against the upper inner aspects of the front teeth. Concentrate the mind on Dan Tian area, inhale slowly and mentally guide Qi to Dan Tian. In the meantime, pull the lower part of the abdomen inward slowly and gently along with the inhalation. Then, hold the breath for a little while. After that, open the lips slightly, put down the tongue to exhale slowly, and mentally guide Qi out from the Dan Tian to the external world through the nose and mouth. In the meantime, bulge the lower part of the abdomen outward along with the movement of the exhalation. After the exhalation, stop breathing for a little while again. See Figure 3.12a,b.

(3) Breathing with Pause: The procedure in this method is similar to that of orthodromic breathing, but the practitioner recites a few words silently in order to prolong both the duration of inhalation and the interval between inhalation and exhalation.

The details of the method are as follows: During inhalation, close the lips naturally and keep the body of the tongue close to the hard palate with its tip in contact with the upper inner aspects of the front teeth. Concentrate the mind on Dan Tian area and inhale slowly to lead Qi to that area. In the meantime, bulge the lower part of the abdomen outward slowly along with the inhalation and recite the first word of a sentence silently. Then, hold the breath for a little while and recite the rest of the sentence. After reciting the last word of the sentence, open the lips slightly and relax the tongue to exhale slowly to lead Qi out from the Dan Tian to the external world through the nose and mouth. In the meantime, pull the lower part of the abdomen inward along with the exhalation. After the exhalation, stop breathing and recite the whole sentence repeatedly before the next breath cycle. A beginner usually starts with a three word sentence, and then gradually increases the number of the words to six or eight.

3.2.3 Imaginal Respiration

Imaginal respiration is to train the breathing in company with certain thoughts and ideas. Following two methods are the most common ones.

(1) Fetal Breathing: The method is also called "Dan Tian Breathing", "Innate Breathing", "Umbilical Breathing", or "Embryonic Respiration". The purpose of the training is to return to the state of infancy. The essence of training is to reduce the rate of respiration as much as you can, like a fetus respiring in the womb. In ancient times it was believed that the fetus respired very slowly in the womb. This method requires the practitioner to imagine that Qi is entering Dan Tian area and staying there when pulling the lower part of the abdomen inward during the inhalation, and then that Qi is going out of the

Dan Tian area slowly when bulging the lower part of the abdomen outward during the exhalation. During the whole procedure of breathing control, the imagination of a fetus in the womb is carried out. Both inhalation and exhalation must be slow, gentle, soft, even, deep and smooth. After practising, the rate of respiration can be reduced significantly, and it is reported that among some skilled practitioners it can be as slow as one or two cycles per minute. Many Qi Gong masters prefer this breathing exercise.

(2) Heel Breathing: It is believed that the ground we stand has the "Earth Qi", which can be absorbed by the body through the foot. The practitioner concentrates the mind on Dan Tian and inhales slowly, thinking that Qi is being conducted to the Dan Tian area. Hold the breath for a little while. During the exhalation, shift the mind successively from Dan Tian (Qi Hai[11], Ren 6, located on the midline of the abdomen, about 2 inches below the umbilicus), Guan Yuan[12] (Ren 4, located on the midline of the abdomen, 4 inches below the umbilicus), Hui Yin[13] (Ren 1, located in the center of the perineum), downward along the medial aspect of both legs to Qi-cavity (acupoint) Yong Quan[14] (K1, located in the center of the soles of both feet), thinking that Qi is being conducted along to the heels and connecting to the ground (the Earth Qi). Therefore the essence of this training is to image that breathing is carried out through the heels or the feet from the ground, not through the lungs.

Then, hold the breath to keep the Qi in Yong Quan for a little while and inhale slowly. During the inhalation, shift the mind from the Qi-cavity Yong Quan upward along the posterior aspects of both legs and through Qi-cavity Chang Qiang[15] (Du 1, located midway between the tip of the coccyx and the anus) and Ming Men[16] (Du 4, located below the spinous process of the second lumbar vertebra) back to the Dan Tian, thinking that Qi is coming back. Hold the breath for a little while after each cycle.

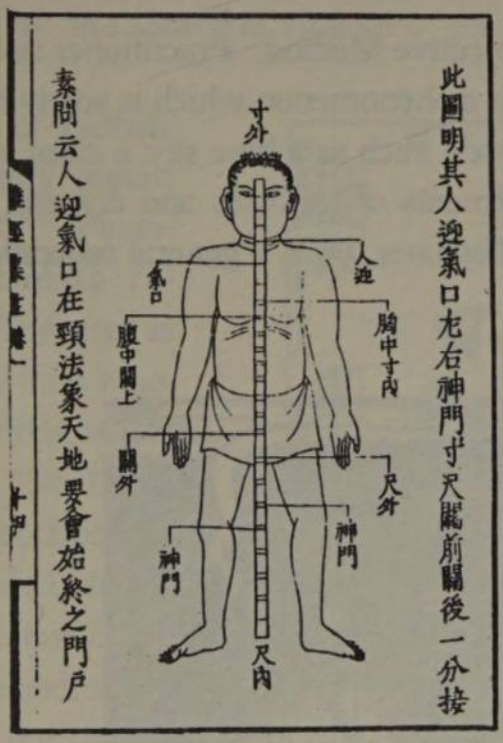
11, 氣海. 12, 關元. 13, 會陰. 14, 湧泉. 15, 長強. 16, 命門.

3.3 Management of Mind

In general, there are three procedures to manage the mind: i. e., relaxation, mind concentration and "State of Void". The management of mind is regarded as the most important and the highest stage in Qi Gong training. The principle of training is to use the mental powers to control mind, as it is said, "To keep mind is to see the mind as to close eyes is to see the eyes."

3.3.1 Relaxation

Relaxation refers to the relaxation of both mind and body. It is necessary to dismiss all stray and distracting thoughts. The more completely the mind and body are relaxed, the easier it is to enter the "State of Void". There are several methods to achieve relaxation. Each method may be repeated several times, if it is felt that relaxation is not yet perfect.



An old drawing of sections of the body with Qi.

(1) Tri-Route Method: This is to think the word "relaxation" and to mentally focus "relaxation" on the parts of the body along three

routes (the lateral, frontal and dorsal routes), which cover the whole body. For details of this training, please see Chapter six.

(2) Tri-Segment Method: This method divides the body into three segments. The first segment includes the head and neck; the second segment includes the shoulders, upper limbs and trunk; and the third segment includes the hips and the lower limbs. It requires the practitioner to imagine "Relaxation" on one of the segments, depending on the particular types of Qi Gong exercises. This procedure can start from the first segment, to the second and third in a top-bottom order.

(3) Point-Relaxed Method: This method is to think "relaxation" on a particular point, such as a Qi-cavity (acupoint), or a small part of the body, such as the tip of the index finger. This method is often used by the skilled Qi Gong practitioners.

(4) Natural Objective Method: Practitioner imagines a particular natural object or a phenomenon which is solely related to "relaxation" and "quietude", such as a blue sky, a calm water, an autumn moon or the movements of tortoises and cranes. This method is often used by the beginner, or as a general relaxation technique for any person.



A contemporary painting of meditation.

3.3.2 Mind Concentration

The procedure is to concentrate the mind or the will constantly on one specific object, which can be a Qi-cavity, a part or an organ of the body, or a thing outside the body, etc. The goal is to achieve centering of the mind, focusing of the will and rearrangement of the thoughts. But, concentration should not be forced. It is said, "If the genuine object can be kept, the genuine mind can be reigned, then the genuine Qi can be held." There are various training methods for mind concentration, but the following are common ones.

(1) Dan Tian Method: The term of "Dan Tian[17]" refers to a Qi-cavity (or an acupoint, called Qi Hai[18], Ren 6), or a circumscribed area on the lower part of the abdomen (see Chapter seven). It is a very important site where the Yin–Yang, Qi, blood, semen, and the spirits of five solid internal organs are flowing into and/or passing through, known as "the source of vital Qi", "the sea of Qi" and "the root of life".

As the term of Taoism, Dan Tian literally means "the elixir field". Physiological alchemists regarded the Dan Tian area as "the furnace" or "the reaction-vessel" of elixir, which is best known as "Nei Dan", where Qi is generated, refined and expanded. In addition, the secretions of the body including blood, saliva and juices, as "the chemicals", will react in Dan Tian.



An old illustration of "the furnace" and its function.

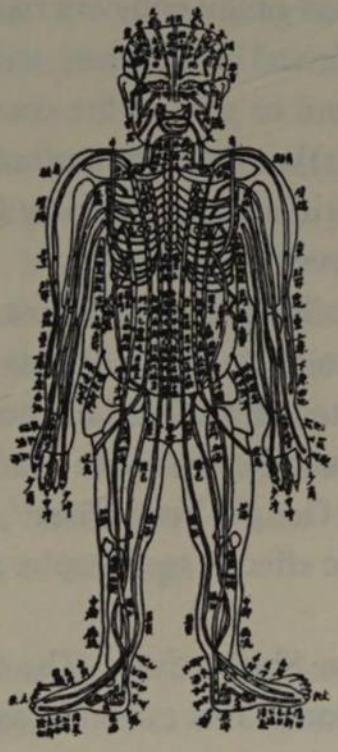
Therefore, training to focus the mind to the Dan Tian area is thought to be the most important basic process in early training stage of Qi Gong exercise. It is known as the door step towards Qi sensation.

In general, there are three steps to practise the Dan Tian Method. First, after the body has been well positioned and relaxed, start to concentrate your own thoughts at the Dan Tian area and adjust your own breathing movements into one of abdominal respiratory modes (see above). The breathing movements are felt to be accompanied by an up-down movement of the Dan Tian area. In 2-4 weeks, beginner will learn and get used to this habit of abdominal respiration. It is suggested that placing both hands on Dan Tian area and moving the hands along with the movement of the Dan Tian area should be helpful in settling into the first step.

Second, after the method of abdominal respiration has been mastered, keep focusing the thoughts at the Dan Tian area and reduce the frequency of breathing gradually by breathing slowly, deeply, softly and smoothly. If this routine proceeds normally and effectively, a feeling of warmth or heat, (i.e., the sensation of Qi), will develop gradually in the Dan Tian area, often starting in a point, the size of a fine needle. Sometimes one feels a tiny stream of heat running around the Dan Tian area. Other feelings such as warmth, numbness, cold or distension in the limbs or in a part or the whole body may occur.

Thirdly, as training proceeds, on the basis of the deep, slow, soft and smooth breathing, the intervals between each breath become longer and longer, and pauses of respiration occur. At this stage, keep focusing the thoughts at the Dan Tian area and utilize the will to consolidate and expand the sensation of Qi . It is often felt that the size of warmth or heat is getting large and that Qi starts moving up in the meridians. This is the step of sensation, generation, accumulation, storage, activation and expansion in the Qi, and the step of control and direction in the circulation of Qi along the meridians. This is the step connecting the mind and body, and is the step which results in better health and longevity.

(2) Jing Luo Method:[19] The procedure of the Jing Luo Method is similar to that described in the Dan Tian Method except that the practitioner is required to focus his or her mind upon Qi-cavity (acupoint) along the meridians instead of only on Dan Tian or Dan Tian area. The practitioner chooses a specific Qi-cavity to concentrate on, according to the mental and physical condition of the individual, and the particular type of Qi Gong exercises, because this method is often used for therapeutic purposes.



An old drawing of Jing Luo system which covers the whole body.

The term "Jing Luo" means channels and collaterals (also known as meridians), in which Qi circulates. Traditional Chinese medicine recognizes twelve regular channels, eight extra channels and fifteen collaterals, which are connected to form a network distributed over the whole body. However, usually only the twelve regular channels and two extra channels (i.e., Du Mai[20] and Ren Mai[21]) are used. Interiorly they connect with the Zang Fu[22] (the internal organs or viscera) and exteriorly with the body surface where the points are dis-

19, 經絡法. 20, 督脉. 21, 任脉. 22, 臟腑.

tributed, a total of 361, known as Qi-cavities or acupoints. These points are thus specific sites through which the Qi of the Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera) is connected. Furthermore, these points can not only store Qi in normal physiological conditions, but also can stagnate Qi causing ailments. Based on the Jing Luo theory of traditional Chinese medicine, it is believed that concentrating the mind or the will constantly on a specific Qi-cavity (acupoint) of a meridian is tantamount to concentrating the mind or the will on the corresponding organ or part of the body, and thus the functions of the organ or part of the body are regulated and enhanced. If the human body is affected by a disease, treatment is carried out by concentrating the mind or will on the corresponding Qi-cavity or Qi-cavities (acupoint(s)) on the body surface accordingly. For detailed explanation of meridians and Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera), see Chapter seven.

Generally speaking, almost all the Qi-cavities (acupoints) are available to serve as the objects for mind concentration. However, those located on the head are not recommended for beginners. The more frequently used ones are: Ming Men[23], Shan Zhong[24], Feng Chi[25], Lao Gong[26], Yong Quan[27], etc. For their detailed locations and therapeutic effects, see Chapter seven.

(3) Nei Shi Method: The term of "Nei Shi[28]" literally means "inner vision". This method trains a person to visualize mentally his or her own internal organs, a method often used by skillful Qi Gong masters. It is said, "When closing your eyes, you have an inner vision of Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera); you can clearly distinguish and examine them." It is believed that the internal organs of the body, such as the heart, lungs, kidneys, etc., can be visualized, examined and corrected through Qi Gong exercises. This method not only allows one to enter the meditative state, but also contributes some therapeutic effects.

Normally, after a period of time in training, such as in the Dan Tian Method or others, the practitioner will be able to sense and con-

23,命門. 24,膻中. 25,風池. 26,勞宮. 27,湧泉. 28,內視.

trol Qi, and also often experience a fire or glow of light from the Qi-cavity, the upper Dan Tian (also called Bai Hui[29]), at the top of the head. The fire or glow of light enables him or her to visualize the internal organs, and Qi can be guided to a certain organ for treatment purposes. This method is often practised by people who suffer from certain diseases involving an internal organ, for example, to visualize and concentrate the heart for heart illness, to visualize and concentrate the kidneys for kidney illness, etc.

(4) Imaginative Method: Instead of concentrating the mind or the will at a point, an area or an organ in the body, this method requires the practitioner to imagine a certain scenery, a certain object or a certain experience. A particular picture in the imagination is selected according to the condition of practitioner and the purpose of a certain type of Qi Gong exercises. If a person is in Yin-deficiency which is evident by manifestations of anxiety, drowsiness, diarrhea, chills, cold hands and legs, etc., the person should imagine lying on a warm sandy beach on a sunny day, or a fire in the fireplace in a warm house. At the same time, the practitioner can recite a certain phrase, for example, when imagining a fire, recite "Fire warms the body." These will enhance the effectiveness of training.

Above are the most common training methods for mind concentration. However, they are often performed in combination in one way or another. In general, the practitioner selects and programs them for a special need, or if you learn from a Qi Gong master, the master will select and program a set of training for you according to your specific needs.

3.3.3 State of Void

The "State of Void" is the final step of the management of mind, a state of total mental freedom. There are several training methods to help you to enter the "State of Void", such as listening to your own

29. 百會.

breathing sound, counting silently the rhythms of breath, reciting silently certain words or phrases repeatedly, such as "relax", "calm", "happy", "healthy", etc., or recalling some pleasant experience from the memory, listening to the ticking of a clock or a watch, or listening to some pieces of light music, etc., until the ears fail to hear and the mind fails to think.

The whole process of entering the "State of Void" can be divided into three phases:

At the first phase, along with the concentration of mind, dismissal of bothersome and distracting thoughts and the regulation of breathing, you will often feel a calm and clear mind, a mild sensation of warmth, and show some trembling of the limbs.

At the second phase, you have already well concentrated the mind and eliminated almost all the bothersome and distracting thoughts, but might be still aware of the surroundings. You might hear extraneous sounds and be disturbed by a comparatively loud noise nearby. However, the sensation of warmth in the body becomes clearer and stronger. Sometimes, certain pleasant hallucinations may occur, and you feel the Qi and/or other sensations, such as a light, a warm stream moving in the body.



"State of Void", Riding on a dragon.

At the final phase, you reach a state of absolute calm and tranquility. All distracting thoughts have ceased, and all sensations and emotions have disappeared. Although you are still awake physiologically, your ears fail to hear, your eyes fail to see and your mind fails to think completely. You are no longer disturbed and annoyed by any surrounding noise, as if you have already been isolated completely from the environment. You only feel extraordinarily relaxed, peaceful, comfortable, calm, and happy. You enjoy these feelings totally.

3.4 Management of Self-Massage

Self-massage (An Mo Gong[30]) has been a part of Qi Gong exercise since early times. It is believed that Qi can be controlled, directed not only by the mind (or the will), but also by physical means, such as self-massage. Traditional Chinese medicine has laid a solid foundation for the management of self-massage. Self-massage works primarily through modulation of the meridian system in which Qi circulates, like "Push the points along the meridians." This is often called "Meridian Self-Massage" as well. The uneven Qi can be corrected, and the stagnant Qi can be moved by self-massage or acupuncture with needles.

In Qi Gong exercises, self-massage is allowed, but not the needle. Self-massage affects Qi not only locally on the superficial portion of the body, but also remotely on the corresponding organs or viscera. Thus, for diseases of internal organs, their corresponding Qi-cavities can be massaged in order to balance the Qi of the organs. For example, the ailment of stomach can be relieved by massaging the area of Qi-cavity Zu San Li which is located at the lower limb. In addition, self-massage can be applied directly to the area which covers or surrounds the internal organ(s). For example, in the case of kidney-related illnesses, the Qi-cavity Ming Men (Du 4), located on the back of the body at the waist, can be massaged.

Traditional Chinese medicine recognized that the hands possess the major secrets of life. Many meridians start and end in the hands,

30.按摩功.

and there are several Qi-cavities (acupoints) in the hands, like Lao Gong[31] and Shi Xuan[32] which are of important significance because of their exerting strong Qi. Qi can be released from these points as some form of therapeutic force.

The manipulation techniques of self-massage often include hand rubbing, pushing, pressing, holding, touching, grasping, kneading, nipping, tapping, etc., but without causing any pain or discomfort.

Self-massage affects a balance either by stimulating Qi or restraining Qi. Where Qi is deficient or is being blocked, it enhances Qi or exerts a tonic effect on Qi. Where Qi is in excess, it brings about its sedation, reduction or elimination. There are many beneficial effects of self-massage including resuscitation, tranquilizing the mind, promoting the flow of Qi, allaying excitement, restoring consciousness, relieving symptoms, expelling malign Qi, relaxing muscles and tendons, and improving local blood circulation.

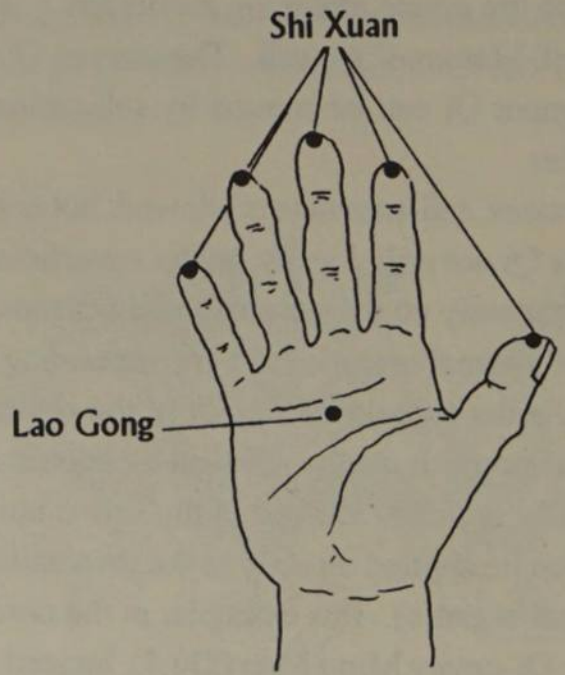


Illustration of location of Qi-cavities – Shi Xuan and Lao Gong.

31,劳宫. 32,十宣.

CHAPTER FOUR

GUIDELINES FOR QI GONG TRAINING



We grow with the heaven and the earth;
we unite with all the beings.

— Zhuang Zi (369–286 B.C.)

In general, because of its natural, gentle, simple relaxed style, Qi Gong is a very safe, effective and pleasurable exercise of mind and body. In order to achieve the best performance and enhance the skill of training, Qi Gong exercises should be performed under certain guidelines which can be classified into general guidelines and guidelines during training.

4.1 General Guidelines

(1) People: The practice of Qi Gong is suitable for men and women, young and old, in health and in sickness, and in particular for those with chronic illnesses. However, Qi Gong should not be practised by patients with severely disturbed mental conditions, with fever, or with acute infectious diseases or trauma.

(2) Personal Life Style: In ancient Chinese philosophy towards life, it is emphasized that an individual person holds the primary responsibility for his or her own health and well-being. For a successful Qi Gong training, it is necessary to have a proper personal life style, that is to have an upright morality, a positive outlook, a good temperament, to eat sensibly, to get sufficient rest, and to avoid abus-

ing your body, etc. It was said, "If a man is irregular in his sleep, intemperate in his eating, and immoderate in his work, sickness will destroy him."

(3) Instruction: Qi Gong exercise can be learned from books, tapes and other means. However, it is strongly recommended that a direct, constant supervision from a Qi Gong master or an experienced instructor is desirable, especially for a beginner. If you learn from someone, remember that he or she, as your teacher, is to be held in great respect. In the Chinese tradition, the teacher is honored and treated as your parent, as the old Chinese saying "A teacher for one day, like a parent for a life time."

(4) Place: Qi Gong training practice can be carried out almost anywhere, either indoors or outdoors, such as in a bed, a chair, on the floor, in a park, in a backyard, in an office, and even on a bus, a train or a plane. When the weather permits, Qi Gong practice should be performed outdoors, in an open area, near trees and plants, because it is believed that fresh air promotes more Da Qi[1], and plants can release some Da Qi. However, Qi Gong training should not be conducted in the draught, in the wind, in the rain or under the scorching sun, or when there is thunder and lightning.

It is desirable to choose a quiet, calm location. External distraction should be avoided as much as possible. The training should not be accompanied by loud music, or strong musical rhythm unless there is some special healing purpose in view. However, since life today is filled with noise, it might have to be tolerated as long as you can concentrate on your training. As long as you feel comfortable and your concentration is not influenced, it is quite acceptable to train with people around, although solitude is to be preferred.

(5) Simplicity: No athletic equipment or apparatus is needed.

(6) Discipline: Learning the practice of Qi Gong is a slow pro-

1. 大氣.

cess. Qi Gong training should be practised on a regular and long-term basis, and not as the old Chinese saying "Go fishing for three days and dry the nets for two days". Perseverance is absolutely necessary in Qi Gong training. The practitioner should proceed in an orderly manner, advance step by step and avoid any haste. Only constant effort can insure success, which does not come in one day or overnight. Qi Gong should be a reflection of a daily routine of good self-disciplinary activity, but not become a dull habit.

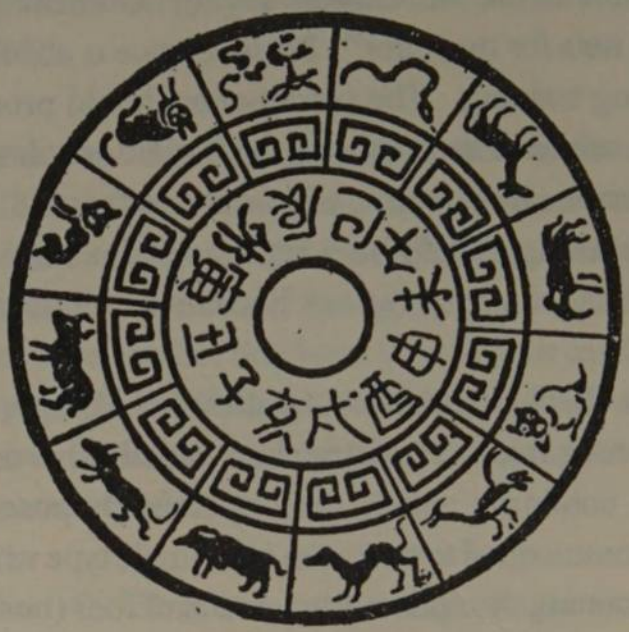
(7) Selection: Each practitioner should select a proper type of Qi Gong and work out a rational program best suited to his or her mental and physical condition and/or for a specific purpose. For the beginner, it is recommended to start with one simple type which makes use of only one training discipline, from a total of four (body posture, breath, mind and self-massage), then to work with more complicated combinations of two or more training disciplines.

(8) Time and Direction: In general, the time and direction of training may not be important to a beginner, who can practise it according to his or her customs and convenience, such as before sleep, after getting up, after work or in any spare time, and who can adopt any direction which is felt to be comfortable.

Training time can last 5-60 minutes or longer, and 1-3 times a day. Training is avoided immediately after a big meal, or when you are very hungry, or during periods of emotional stress, such as profound joy or sadness. Training practice should be delayed for at least 20-30 minutes after strenuous work.

For a practitioner who has reached a certain level, it is recommended to choose a proper time and direction to conduct the training in order to enhance the quality of training. According to Chinese Shi Chen[2] (the daily time), the time between 11 PM and 11 AM, when Yang increases and Yin decreases, is most suitable for people suffering from Yang insufficiency, the main symptoms of which are chilli-

2, 時辰 (the 12 two-hour periods into which the day was divided, each being given the name of one of the 12 Earthly Branches, represented with 12 different animals).



An old drawing of the 12 animals representing the circle of "Shi Chen".

ness, cold limbs, lack of thirst, pale urine, weak pulse, pale tongue. In contrast, the time from 11AM to 11PM, when Yin increases and Yang decreases, is beneficial to people suffering from Yin insufficiency, the main symptoms of which are anxiety, drowsiness, diarrhea, a feeling of low grade fever in the afternoon, dry throat, hot flushes, night sweating, headache, thin pulse, light red tongue.

As for the direction, it is believed that the east is associated with wood, the south with fire, the west with metal and the north with water. The east and the south belong to "Yang" while the west and the north belong to "Yin". The practitioner should adopt the direction according to his or her general mental and physical condition, to a specific purpose of a type of Qi Gong exercises. For example, a person, who is in Yang insufficiency, should face the east or the south. For a person, who is in balance with Yin and Yang, it is suggested to face the south, with the back to the north, while practising in the sitting posture; whereas when lying down, the head lies towards the south and the feet towards the north. In principle, the body's position should be aligned with the earth's magnetic field.

(9) Apparel: No special apparel is requested. Any loose, comfortable clothes are acceptable to allow ease of movement. Do not wear a tight waist belt, wrist watch band, shoelaces, garters, or high-heeled shoes. Keep warm at all times.

4.2 Guidelines during Training

(1) Relax the body and compose the mind as much as possible. Keep calm and have a fully prepared mind against any sudden sounds in the surroundings, such as greetings, shouting, crying, or the sounds of vehicles. Exert your mind to regain composure if you are disturbed, shocked or surprised. When you are called by someone during the training, it is not necessary to respond immediately, and you should remain calm and at ease, and not allow yourself to be angry at being disturbed.

(2) Breathing should be natural, smooth, slow and gentle. Respiration exercises should be conducted in a tranquil manner without excessive effort.

(3) Sometimes, when a type of Jing Gong (static Qi Gong) is being practised, which is supposed to have no movement of body parts involved, some practitioners show some spontaneous movements, like a natural swinging of the limbs. If these spontaneous movements occur, do not try to control and stop them unless you want to end the training session. It is believed that the spontaneous movements are due to the effects of strong movements of Qi in the body and the effects of activation of some local circuits in the meridians.

(4) The practitioner may adjust uncomfortable postures whenever necessary. However, if there are some sensations of local heat, cold, touching and itching not caused by insect bites or stings and if they do not cause unbearable pain and discomfort, they should be left alone to pass off naturally.

(5) Some practitioners will feel warm or hot all over the body, resulting in slight perspiration which is allowable. However, profuse sweating should be avoided. When it occurs, stop training.

(6) If saliva secretion increases it should be swallowed and never spat out. In traditional Chinese medicine, saliva is regarded as the "Jade Juice" or "Metallous Fluid". Modern Western science acknowledges that saliva contains many biological enzymes and peptide molecules, such as amylase, epidermal growth factor, etc.

(7) If feeling fatigue, the practitioner should simply concentrate the mind on Dan Tian and/or take a short break, and later resume training.

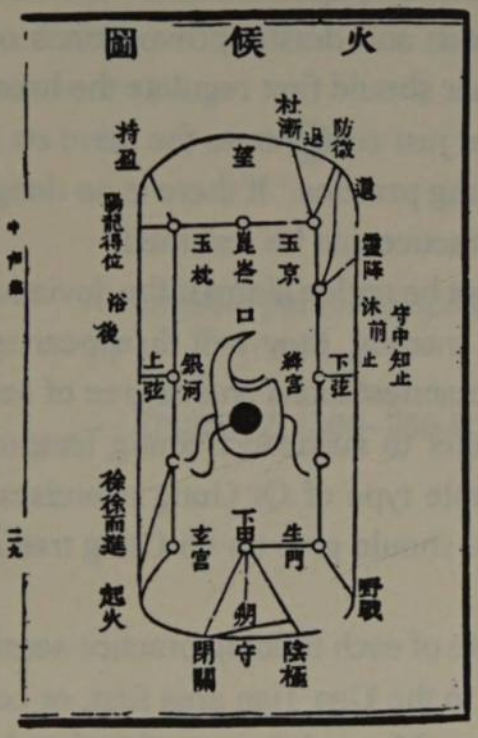
(8) In the standing posture, the practitioner's feet should be rooted firmly on the ground. In the sitting posture, the practitioner should have the feet touching on the ground firmly, and not suspended in midair. The feet may be placed on a chair or a stool or on the edge of a bed, which will prevent swelling and falling to the ground, which might be caused by the sensation and reaction of Qi.

(9) After the training has reached a certain stage, many practitioners will experience a mental sensation, such as the "State of Void" or lighting. These sensations are transient and will disappear in a very short period or after training ceases. Thus, they should cause no alarm, panic, curiosity or pursuit of their origin.

(10) On very rare occasions, a few practitioners might experience dizziness, fear, pain, severe hallucination and other discomforts which may derive from the Qi Gong exercises. Such deviations usually can be corrected by yourself or a Qi Gong master easily and effectively.

These deviations arising from Qi Gong exercises are chiefly

caused by improper and forced training. When a particular type of Qi Gong selected is not suitable, or the practitioner forces himself or herself to train hastily and recklessly instead of following the principles and the rules laid down, the deviations may occur. Also, some mental burdens, such as suspiciousness or anxiety, can cause the deviations. On the other hand, it is easy to mistake the normal effects of Qi Gong exercise, like the sensation of Qi , as the deviations,



An old drawing of how to avoid Qi deviations.

As far as the training practice itself is concerned, there are also other factors that may cause the deviations. Some disorders are due to incorrect postures or postures being forced. Some disorders, like headache, dizziness, aching neck, stiff neck and pain in the shoulder and the back, are due to failing to relax properly in mind and in body. Stiff or painful neck is usually caused by forced efforts in holding the head. A feeling of distention in the eyes may result from a prolonged fixed gaze during the training. Pain in the back and hips may be caused by forced twisting at the waist. Sore knees may result from crouching too low or over-bending the knees. Disturbances in breath-

ing often result from errors in controlling respiratory movements. Unnatural breathing may cause headache or tightness in the chest. Exhaling too long or trying to expel all the air can cause shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, and abdominal distention. The beginner should learn to breathe properly and not to hold the breath too long. Generally speaking, it is almost impossible for a beginner to achieve absolute tranquility. Pursuing it with forceful, painstaking efforts may cause headache, dizziness, tightness in the chest and other symptoms.

In case of sudden and drastic provocations or severe hallucinations, the practitioner should first regulate the breathing and guide Qi back to Dan Tian or just concentrate the mind on Dan Tian area, and then close the training practice. If there is no danger to yourself or to other people, the practice can be resumed.

There should not be undue alarm if the deviations occur, as generally after you stop training, they will disappear spontaneously. Depending upon the manifestations and degree of severity of the symptoms, you may prefer to suspend training temporarily, or switch to another more suitable type of Qi Gong exercises. If the deviations persist or recur you should give up Qi Gong training completely.

(11) At the close of each training practice session, the practitioner should conduct Qi to the Dan Tian area first, or concentrate the mind on the Dan Tain area. Meanwhile, one of the hands can be used to rub gently around Dan Tian area 10-30 times. If there is much saliva in the mouth, rinse the mouth with the saliva several times and swallow it. Finally, take several natural breaths, open the eyes slowly, and gently loosen and move the limbs, the joints and the body. Back to the real world!

(12) In the case of Jing Gong (static Qi Gong), rub both hands lightly, then gently wipe the palms on the face 10-30 times, or wipe the palms from the front of your face to the back of your neck. In the case of Dong Gong (dynamic Qi Gong), take a walk with several deep breaths, and gently stretch the back and the limbs.

SENSATION OF QI



A complete person is spiritual.

— Zhuang Zi (369–286 B.C.)

The most important measure of an effective Qi Gong training is whether the practitioner can sense and control the Qi. This is known as "Qi Gan[1]", and it literally means the sensation of Qi. Without practice of Qi Gong, the Qi travels in the meridians and it is not noticed in any special way. However, in Qi Gong training, the Qi can be sensed primarily due to the activation of Qi and increase in flow of Qi, and due to the meditative state. The form, amount and depth of the sensation vary depending on many factors, such as the type of Qi Gong exercise adopted, the state of one's health, etc. In general, the sensation of Qi is described as the physical reaction and the mental reaction, and the manner of circulating Qi, which is sensed, is described as the microcosmic cycle and the heavenly cycle.

5.1 The Physical Reaction

The practitioner may feel various sensations in the body, such as warmth, heat, cold, extension, numbness, heaviness, itching, soreness, tingling, largeness, smallness, etc. Often one particular sensation dominates the others at one particular time. A sense of warmth or heat is the most common one. The sensation is usually localized on a small spot on the body where there is a Qi-cavity; then it spreads

1. 氣感.

into a large area or into an organ and moves directly along the meridian system in a certain pattern. Light sensations also occur (see section of the microcosmic cycle in this Chapter).

The sensations are explained as the results of free movement of Qi in the meridians locally or systemically, as the manifestations of an efficient Qi Gong exercise program. For examples, when Qi is circulating freely and is accelerated, it is felt as a sense of warmth or heat or numbness, etc.; when the capillaries are expanding, it is felt as a sense of extension. When the extension spreads to other parts of the body, the parts or even the whole body feel heavier, larger and taller. When Qi flows vigorously and passes through some obstructed Qi-cavities in the meridians, there is a sensation of itching or soreness or tingling, etc.

Some practitioners display spontaneous movements of the limbs or of the whole body, some muscles twitch slightly and some clickings of the joints occur. These reactions are the results of the strong flow of Qi.

5.2 The Mental Reaction

When entering the "State of Void", there are various mental reactions, such as freshness, calmness, tranquility, happiness, hallucinations, and even a sense of becoming invisible, or disappearance from the site. These are the results of free moving Qi in Zang Fu[2] (the internal organs or viscera), and the strong expression of Shen[3] (the mind and spirit) activated and transformed by the Qi.

Some skillful practitioners feel a sense of becoming completely free from the body and the actual surroundings, uniting oneself with heaven, merging the self with the sky, clouds, earth, mountains and the waters of ocean and rivers, and with the trees, etc. It feels like entering a new totally different world of completely natural surroundings. These are the most pleasurable and valuable experiences of Qi Gong exercises, the symbols of successful Qi Gong training.

After each Qi Gong training, owing to the meditative mind, re-

2. 臟腑. 3. 神.

laxed body and smooth breathing, the practitioner often feels a joyful experience, a peaceful emotion, a good mood, and feels at ease with the world. He or she has a positive attitude, a clear head with sharp thinking, with high spirits in a comfortable, strong body. Most practitioners integrate Qi Gong exercise as an essential part of their daily life. Many Qi Gong masters would put it like this: "I would rather practise Qi Gong than eat meals, if one between them had to be chosen."



An old drawing of a man and his surroundings.

5.3 The microcosmic Cycle[4]

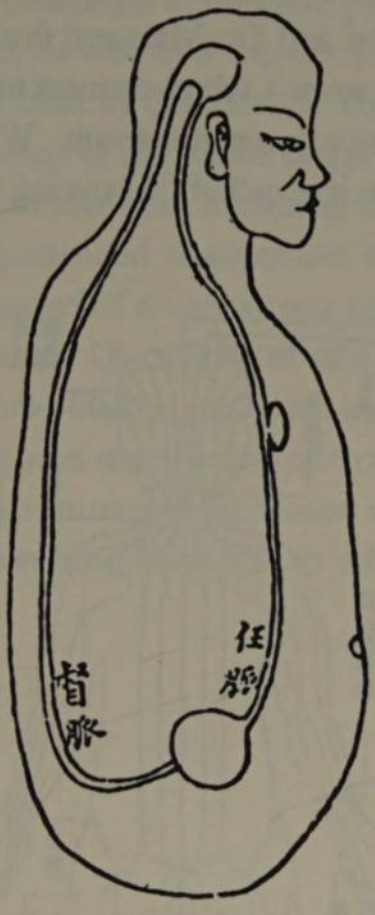
The microcosmic cycle (also called the small circuit) consists of two meridians, i.e., Du Mai[5] (the governing vessel) running up the back of the body from the perineum to the head; and Ren Mai[6] (the conception vessel) running in front of the body from the perineum to the head. The two meridians connect inside the mouth, forming a complete circuit. When Qi is sensed and circulated in the circuit, it is called "mastering the microcosmic cycle".

Often, it starts with a feeling of warmth or heat on a very small point below the navel (Dan Tian), gradually spreading and intensifying. Later, Qi is sensed moving down from below the navel to the perineum (Hui Yin[7], Ren 1, known as the "port of mortality"), then up along the spine between the kidneys, opposite the navel (Ming Men[8], Du 4, known as the "life gate"), to the top of the head (Bai Hui[9], Du 20, known as the "hundred convergence"). Then, Qi moves down over the front of the chest via the midpoint between the two nipples (Shan Zhong[10], Ren 17, known as the "scarlet palace") back to the Dan Tian area. At first, it is difficult for Qi to pass the Qi-cavities along the meridians, which often act as obstacles, or perhaps the pathway of the meridians is so narrow that Qi cannot pass. However, as training continues, Qi will gradually circulate freely in the microcosmic cycle, and the meridians seem becoming larger, so volume of Qi increases.

When starting to sense Qi circulating in the circuit, some people experience light sensations, such as flashing lights before the eyes or fire-lights inside the head. Some are just ordinary white lights; others are colorful like neon lights. The lights appear to be swaying to and fro, or rotating at a high speed around the cycle. Because of the light, the practitioner is able to visualize what is inside his or her own body, in particular Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera), and then it is possible to diagnose the condition of individual organs and ultimately treat a disease of the organ utilizing Qi. Again, the degrees of

4,小周天. 5,督脉. 6,任脉. 7,會陰. 8,命門. 9,百會. 10,膻中.

light sensations and the colors vary according to the level of one's Qi Gong accomplishment and the type of Qi Gong exercises adopted.



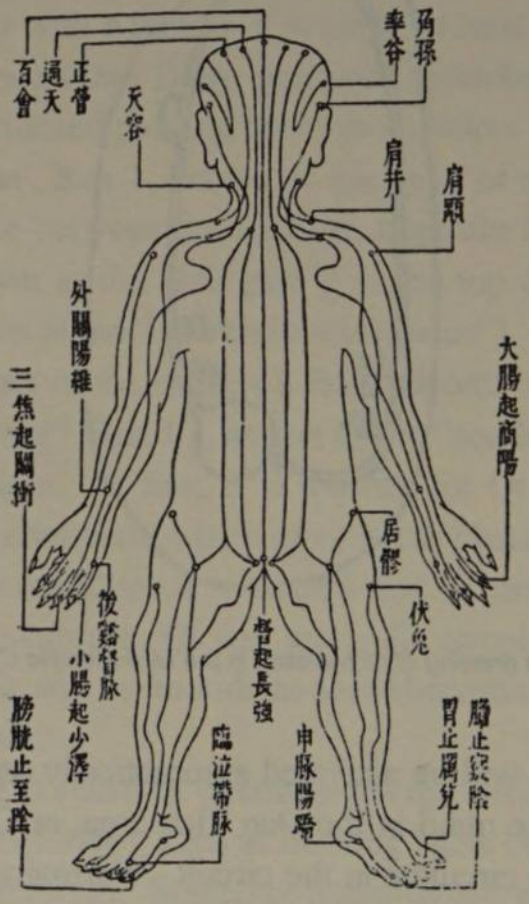
An old drawing of Qi traveling in the Microcosmic Cycle.

The circuit will be activated automatically once the practitioner concentrates the mind in the Dan Tian area, or Qi is guided by the mind or will to circulate in the circuit. Normally, it will take about three months of practising to start sensing Qi moving in the circuit, known as "one hundred days for the foundation of the microcosmic cycle". Under regular Qi Gong training, it takes many years to master the microcosmic cycle.

Why Qi circulates in this particular cycle and not in the others is a phenomenon that has not been satisfactorily explained in ancient or modern terms.

5.4 The Heavenly Cycle[11]

The heavenly cycle (also called the large circuit) consists of the two meridians, Ren Mai and Du Mai, and the other twelve regular meridians (see Chapter seven), which connect to each other and cover the whole body, forming a complete circuit. When Qi is sensed and circulated in the circuit, it is called "mastering the heavenly cycle".



An old drawing of Qi traveling in the Heavenly Cycle.

In general, only after mastering "the microcosmic cycle", is the practitioner capable of beginning the training for activation of the heavenly cycle, because much more conditioning and concentration

11, 大周天.

of the mind are needed to open the circuit and move Qi through many more Qi-cavities in this circuit. The heavenly circuit is that Qi, such as the feeling of warmth and heat, can be spread from the microcosmic cycle into other meridians in different parts of the body, including the hands and feet, as well as the internal organs. Two important Qi-cavities are often used in this circuit: Yong Quan[12] (K 1, in the kidney meridian, located in the center of the soles) and Lao Gong[13] (P 8, in the pericardium meridian, located in the middle of the palms).

Having once experienced engagement of the heavenly circuit, the practitioner is assured of a very strong flow of Qi, and is able to direct the Qi through any Qi-cavities of any meridian to any part of the body, and therefore obtain super heath and longevity. To master the heavenly cycle requires many years (often more than twenty years) of hard training. This is probably the reason why, in any period, only a few Qi Gong masters have been able to achieve this stage.

12,涌泉. 13,劳宫.

CHAPTER SIX

COMMONLY-PRACTISED QI GONG EXERCISES



You become strong when you overcome yourself;
you become rich when you are contented;
you have will when you act.

— Lao Zi (Lao Tzu) (6th century B.C.)

More than 200 types of Qi Gong exercises, created and developed by different schools, are recorded in the literature. According to the character of body movements three classes of Qi Gong exercises are recognized: Jing Gong[1] (static Qi Gong); An Mo Gong[2] (self-massage) and Dong Gong[3] (dynamic Qi Gong). The following types are in common use because they are easy to practice, powerful and effective.

6.1 Jing Gong (Static Qi Gong)

Jing Gong is a class of exercises performed primarily by the mind or the will. The body seems in the state of stillness because of no physical motion involved. However, Qi is moved and activated, and the internal organs (the viscera) are exercised and promoted in the body.

6.1.1 Fang Song Gong[4] (Relaxation Qi Gong)

(1) Posture: Standing, sitting and lying postures are allowable, but the sitting posture is the most convenient in practice and the lying posture is more suitable to a weak constitution. The tongue tip is

1,静功. 2,按摩功. 3,動功. 4,放松功.

raised against the hard palate with the eyes slightly drooping throughout the exercise.

(2) Breathing: Start with natural breathing and proceed to orthodromic abdominal breathing gradually.

(3) Concentration: Concentrate the mind on Dan Tian and try to achieve the feeling of relaxation in order to learn how to relax the body actively and perfectly with intention.

(4) Tri-Route Method: Think or imagine "relaxation" in the parts of the body along three routes from above downwards.

The first route goes along the lateral aspect of both sides of the body, starting from the head, downwards to the neck, over both shoulders along the arms, elbows, forearms, wrists, palms, and ending at the fingertips of both hands.

The second route goes along the frontal aspect of the body, starting from the top of the head, downwards to the face, neck, chest, abdomen, both thighs, knees, legs, ankles, and ending at the toes of both feet.

The third route goes downwards along the dorsal aspect of the body, starting from the back of the head, downwards to the nape of the neck, over the back, waist, posterior aspects of both thighs, behind the knees and heels, and ending at the soles of both feet.

The practitioner begins with the first route and proceeds to the second and third ones successively. Each route usually takes three to ten minutes to complete. If relaxation of the body is still not perfect after completing all three routes, the subject may focus his or her mind on an area around the navel for one minute and then repeat the whole procedure.

Other relaxation methods can be employed as well, see Chapter three for details.

(5) Closing: Before ending the exercise, return the mind from anywhere to Dan Tian and imagine that Qi is converging to that area

from all parts of the body. The beginner may place the palm of one hand on the navel with the other hand placed over it, and move the hands clockwise or counter-clockwise around the navel to draw 20-30 circles. Enlarge the circles gradually until reaching the pelvic bones below and the ribs above. Then, after a short pause, move the hands in the opposite direction to draw circles of equal number, decreasing size gradually and coming to rest at the navel. After that, rub the hands together, rub the eyes lightly and close the training smoothly.

(6) Explanation: This type of Qi Gong exercise aims at regulating the whole body into a relaxed and comfortable state through a step-by-step relaxation of all parts of the body. It has the function of activating and promoting the circulation of Qi and blood in the meridians, thus enhancing and coordinating the activity of the internal organs. It is often used for relieving stress, anxiety, functional headache, insomnia and other emotional disorders.

6.1.2 Tu Na Gong[5] (Expelling-Admitting Qi Gong)

(1) Posture: The sitting (including plain sitting and leg-crossing sitting), lying and standing postures are suitable, see Figure 6.1a,b,c.

(2) Breathing: Start with orthodromic abdominal breathing and proceed to breathing with pause gradually. However, the latter is not suitable for people with hypertension, gastric and duodenal ulcers, and weak constitutions.

(3) Concentration: The object for mind concentration is chiefly Dan Tian (Qi Hai, Ren 6). In addition, other objects are the Qi-cavities, such as Yin Tang (Extra 1), Hui Yin (Ren 1), and etc., for their locations, see Chapter seven.

(4) Procedures: After these preparatory steps are completed, start to relax the mind and body with the eyes closed or half-closed, and

5. 吐納功.



(a) (b)

(c)

Figure 6.1

dismiss all distracting thoughts. Breathe through the nose or through both the nose and mouth. During inhalation, guide Qi to Dan Tian with intention. After a long period of training, a sensation of warmth will appear in the lower part of the abdomen and the feeling of "Qi is fully filled in Dan Tian" will be experienced.

(5) Closing: The same as in Fang Song Gong.

6.1.3 Nei Yang Gong[6] (Inner Nourishing Qi Gong)

(1) Preparations: Dismiss all distractions from the mind. Take off hat, glasses and wristwatch. Change into loose clothing with belts

6.内養功.

and buttons loosened. Drink a small amount of fresh water and relax yourself physically and mentally as much as possible.

(2) Posture: Lying and sitting postures are suitable.

Lying Posture: Lie on right or left side with the head on a pillow and the neck bent forward slightly (Figure 6.2). When lying on the right side, for example, place the left hand on the left hip with the palm facing downwards, and place the right hand on the pillow in front of the face with the palm facing upwards about 2-3 inches away from the head. Bend the left leg to an angle of about 120 degrees and place it on the right leg, which is extended straight naturally.



Figure 6.2

Sitting Posture: Sit on a stool with the feet on the ground (Figure 6.3a,b). Set the legs apart as wide as the width of the shoulders with the knees bent about 90 degrees. Place the hands on the middle third of either thigh with the palms facing downwards and the elbows bent naturally.

(3) Concentration: Concentrate the mind on Dan Tian and dismiss all distracting thoughts.

(4) Breathing: Abdominal breathing is suitable. The practitioner may breathe through the nose only or through the nose and mouth. When breathing through the nose only, raise the tongue against the hard palate during inhalation and imagine that "Qi is guided to Dan Tian." and during exhalation, detach the tongue from the hard palate



(a) (b)

Figure 6.3

to lead Qi out naturally. When breathing through both the nose and mouth, inhale through the nose, thinking that "Qi is reaching Dan Tian"; then exhale through the mouth. After each breath, hold the breath for a little while with the tongue raised against the hard palate and think of a few words silently. Then, put down the tongue to start the breathing again.

(5) Silent Reciting: The practitioner keeps a few words in his or her mind during the training. Start with a two- or three-word phrase or sentence, proceed to a maximum of 9-10 words gradually, for examples, "keep quiet", "sit quietly", "keep myself quiet", "I am keeping myself quiet", etc. When breathing through the nose only, start the inhalation with the first word, hold the breath to think of the middle portion of the phrase or sentence, and exhale with the last word. When breathing through both the nose and mouth, just think of the words during the interval of each breath.

(6) Closing: The same as described for Fang Song Gong.

(7) Explanation: This type of Qi Gong is characterized by the coordination of silent reading of words or phrases with respiratory training. It has regulating effects on the functional activities of the

nervous, cardiovascular and digestive systems, and is one of the most commonly used supplementary techniques in the treatment of diseased conditions of the internal organs.

6.1.4 Qiang Zhuang Gong[7] (Roborant Qi Gong)

(1) Preparations: The same as those described in Nei Yang Gong.

(2) Posture: Sitting and standing are suitable.

Sitting Posture: Adopt single or double leg-crossing sitting posture, or plain sitting postures. Place the hands in front of the lower part of the abdomen with the palms facing each other. See Chapter three.

Standing Posture: Stand upright with feet apart as wide as the width of the shoulders and the knees bent slightly. Place the hands in front of the lower part of the abdomen or in front of the chest with the elbows slightly curved and the palms 1.5 inches apart and facing each other as if holding a ball.

(3) Breathing: Close the mouth and breathe through the nose. Adopt the natural, orthodromic or antidromic breathing (see Chapter three).

(4) Concentration: The object for concentration is Dan Tian. During exhalation, shift the mind from Dan Tian to the perineum and imagine that Qi is flowing from there through the thighs, knees and legs to the Qi-cavity Yong Quan; while during inhalation, imagine that Qi is being drawn back from Yong Quan through the legs, knees and thighs to meet at the perineum again. Then return the mind to Dan Tian until the next breath.

(5) Closing: The same as for Fang Song Gong.

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7. 強壯功.

6.1.5 Zhan Zhuang Gong[8] (Stump-Standing Qi Gong)

(1) Posture: According to the practitioner's physical condition, choose one of the following postures,

Natural Stump-Standing: Stand upright with feet flat, parallel and apart as wide as the shoulder width, the knees bent slightly, and the eyes looking straight ahead. Place both hands in front of the lower part of the abdomen with the palm of the left hand on Dan Tian and the right hand upon the left hand. (Figure 6. 4a).

Tri-Round-Style Stump-Standing: Follow the above posture, move the hands up over the shoulders with the elbows bent and the palms facing each other as if holding a ball (Figure 6.4b); or move the hands up to the level of the chest with the elbows bent and the palms facing the body as if embracing the stump of a big tree (Figure 6.4c).



(a)



(b)

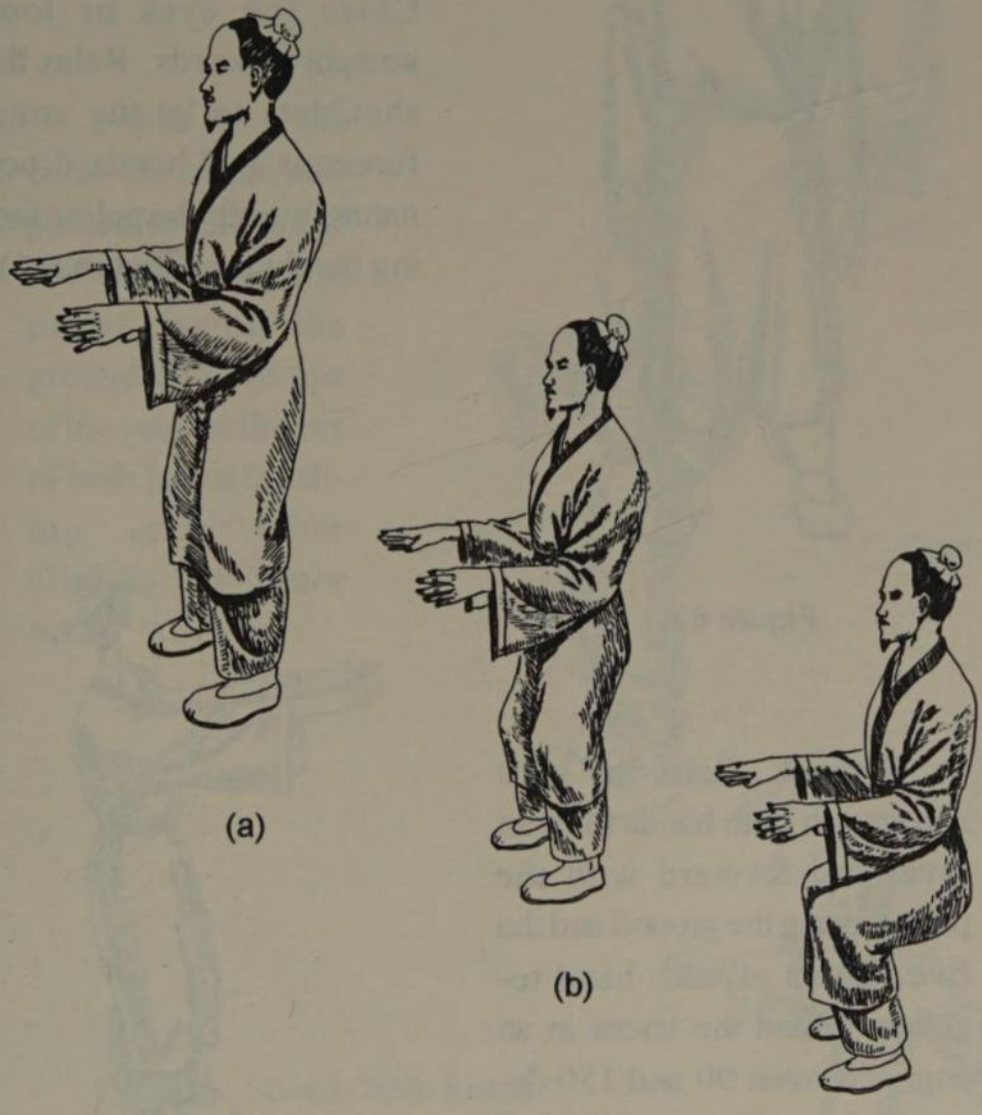


(c)

Figure 6.4

8, 站樁功.

Pressing-Style Stump-Standing: Follow the posture of natural stump-standing, raise the hands to the level of the waist with the palms facing the ground, the fingers spread and pointing ahead, and the forearms parallel with the floor as if pressing something downwards. The knees can be bent slightly (Figure 6.5a), moderately (Figure 6.5b), or deeply (Figure 6.5c), according to the physical conditions of the practitioner.



(a) (b) (c)

Figure 6.5

Mixed Stump-Standing: The body movements take place, but without moving the feet. These are six forms to follow successively.



Figure 6.6

Form 1. Stand with the feet parallel and spaced as wide as the shoulder-width, the spine straightened and the abdomen pulled inward. Close the eyes or look straight forwards. Relax the shoulders to let the arms, forearms and hands droop naturally with the palms facing the thighs. (Figure 6.6).

Form 2. Raise the arms and stretch both hands to chest level and forward with the palms facing the ground and the five fingers of each hand together. Bend the knees in an angle between 90 and 150 degrees, depending on individual physical conditions. (Figure 6.7).

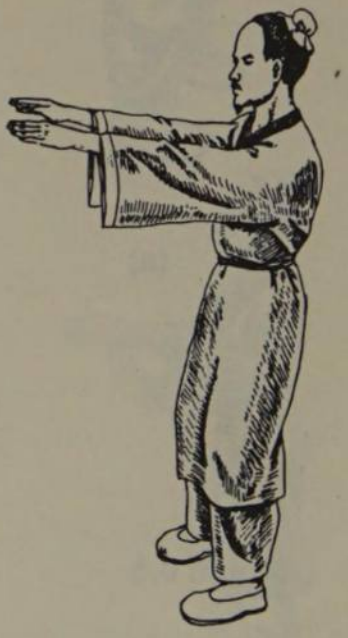
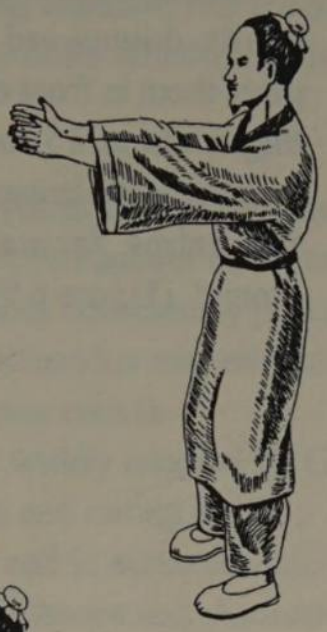


Figure 6.7

Form 3. Turn the palms to face each other. (Figure 6.8a).



(a)

Form 4. Pull back the hands and place them in front of the chest with the palms facing the ground and the tips of the middle fingers of both hands touching each other slightly. (Figure 6.8b).



(b)

Figure 6.8



(c)

From 5. Stretch both hands on the level out to the left and right respectively with the palms facing the ground, as a bird spreading out its wings. (Figure 6.8c).

Form 6. Move the hands downward and place them in front of the thighs about 15 inches away from the knees with the palms facing the ground. (Figure 6.9).



Figure 6.9

Finally return to Form 1 and stand upright for three minutes. Then, raise the hands before the body to the level of the chest with the palms facing upward and the fingertips of one hand pointing to those of the other as if holding a weight during inhaling, and then move the hands to the level of the lower part of the abdomen with the palms facing the ground as if pressing a ball downward during exhaling. Repeat these movements three times altogether.

The time taken for each form depends on physical ability. The practitioner may spend only one minute for each form at the beginning and proceed to more than ten minutes for each form gradually with improvement in physical condition. Therefore, it may take from ten minutes to one hour to complete all the forms of the exercise.

(2) Breathing: Natural, orthodromic and antidromic breathing are acceptable. The practitioner may begin with natural breathing and proceed to other types of breathing gradually.

(3) Concentration: The practitioner may start with the imaginative method and proceed to Dan Tian or Jing Luo method gradually.

(4) Closing: Warm the palms by rubbing together, rub the head, eyes and face with the warm palms lightly 20 times and then close the training.

(5) Explanation: While practicing this type of Qi Gong, relax the body and mind, and keep a correct posture throughout the training session; proceed with a smiling face, without consciously pursuing special sensations. If any sensations or spontaneous movements occur, keep calm and just let them take their own course.

This type of Qi Gong is one of the most widely adopted Qi Gong exercises for keeping fit and for preventing and curing illness. It is particularly suitable for weak constitutions and in some chronic diseases, such as neurasthenia, coronary heart disease and disorders of the gastro-intestinal system.

6.1.6 Tu Na Fa[9] (Method of Expelling and Admitting)

(1) Relax the body and mind.

(2) Sit on a stool. Place the hands on the knees with the palms facing upwards.

(3) Exhale through the nose with force to reduce the capacity of the thorax as much as possible. In the meantime, pull inwards the lower part of the abdomen slowly to produce a feeling of lifting the pelvic floor in order to produce a tonic effect.

(4) Inhale slowly, smoothly and deeply. In the meantime, raise the eyebrows slightly and bulge out the lower part of the abdomen slowly, thinking that Qi is being directed to the lower abdomen.

(5) Turn the palms to face the ground. Incline the upper part of the body forward slowly to an angle of 30 degrees between the trunk and the thighs, and then return to the previous position. After doing

9. 吐納法.

this movement 21 times, stand up, massage the Qi-cavity Wei Zhong[10] (UB 40, for its location, see Chapter seven) of both knees for a little while.

(6) During the training, when available, a Qi Gong master pinches the bridge of the practitioner's nose lightly with the master's thumb and index finger of the right hand, and presses the practitioner's lower part of the abdomen with the master's left hand to give a hint for the arrival of Qi.

(7) The Qi Gong master massages the practitioner's chest, back, shoulder and lateral aspect of the chest on both sides with his or her palms. Each site should be massaged 9 times in order to regulate the tension of the muscles and to promote the circulation of Qi in the meridians.

6.1.7 Zhou Tian Gong[11] (Heavenly Circuit Qi Gong)

Zhou Tian Gong (also called "elixir pellet prowess") includes the "small heavenly circuit Qi Gong" and the "large heavenly circuit Qi Gong". At present, they are probably the most commonly practised types of Qi Gong. Qi is activated to travel in the small circuit (also called the microcosmic cycle) and the large circuit (also called the heavenly cycle). For detail description of the two circuits, see Chapter five.

Zhou Tian Gong is known for its activating and feeling Qi faster than most other forms, and having beneficial effects for strengthening the mind-body, treating various chronic diseases and prolonging life.

Small Heavenly Circuit Qi Gong[12]

(1) Posture: Natural standing, the leg-crossed sitting, plain sitting postures or supine lying are suitable. The chest is slightly drawn in with the spine erect, the head raised, the shoulders relaxed, the eyes slightly closed and the tongue tip elevated against the hard palate.

10,委中. 11,周天功. 12,小周天功.



Illustration of natural standing by Small Heavenly Circuit Qi Gong.

(2) Breathing: For a beginner, assume natural breathing. After first twelve days, change to orthodromic abdominal breathing. Later, proceed to antidromic abdominal breathing when well-trained.

(3) Preparation: Relax the body and mind. Rid the mind of stray thoughts. Choose a quiet location.

(4) Procedure: In first 20-30 days, concentrate the mind on Dan Tian, without any forceful intention. Regulate the breathing to be soft, deep and slow in step with the rise and fall of the abdomen. Throughout training, Qi can be sensed gradually in Dan Tian. Normally it appears as a small, warm feeling. Later the size of the feeling become larger, such as the size of fist, and intensity of heat increases. Meanwhile, it is felt that the function of digestive system is enhanced, showing the gastric peristaltic movements enhanced and a good appetite.

In next 30 days, the sensation of flowing of warmth will develop. Naturally, follow with the mind the traveling of the warm

current. In general, start from Dan Tian, slowly moving through Hui Yin (Ren 1), along the Du Mai in the back, via the tail bone, right up to Ming Men (Du 4). Often Qi-cavities can act as blockages so that it is difficult for Qi to open them and travel through. Once Qi passes the Qi-cavity Ming Men, a feeling of warmth or heat is shown at the back. Meanwhile, the whole body appears so light as you walk in the sky.

After 60 days, Qi will reach the top of the head (Bai Hui, Du 20, also called the upper Dan Tian), and then forward and down over the face where the two meridians, Du Mai and Ren Mai, meet. It is felt a clear head, and a sound sleep occurs.

Lastly, Qi descends along the Ren Mai to the chest, Shan Zhong (Ren 7, also called the middle Dan Tian), and returns to Dan Tian, completing one cycle of the "small heavenly circuit".

As time goes by, Qi will become strong and move fast. For some descriptions of the Qi sensation and traveling in the circuit, see Chapter five.

(5) Closing: When the training practice is finished, take several deep relaxed natural breathings, concentrate the mind on Dan Tian for a while to allow the Qi returning to its root, then rub the hands and face for several times and close the training.

Large Heavenly Circuit Qi Gong[13]

The training procedure is similar to the small heavenly circuit Qi Gong, but the sensation of warmth (Qi) travels to different parts of the body along the twelve regular meridians, including the limbs and the internal organs. At this stage, Qi can be transmitted through the Qi-cavity Yong Quan (K 1, located on the sole of the foot) to the ground, thus connecting the body with the earth. Also, Qi can be emitted from the Qi-cavity Lao Gong (P 8, located in the middle of the palm) to an object outside. For some description of this circuit, please see Chapter five.

13,大周天功.

6.2 An Mo Gong[14] (Self-Massage)

An Mo Gong, also called meridian self-massage, is based on the modulation of the meridian system through manipulation on Qi-cavities (acupoints). It is commonly used for general personal health care and for treatment of many illnesses. Common sets of manipulation are described below, which can be practised successively in the order: the head, face, upper-limbs, chest, abdomen, waist, lower-limbs, and also can be practised selectively with a number of Qi-cavities, with one part of the body or even with one Qi-cavity. The locations of most commonly-used Qi-cavities and their functions are found in Chapter seven.

Preparation: Adopt sitting and standing postures. Assume natural breathing. Relax the body and mind. Get rid of stray thoughts and concentrate on Dan Tian for 3-5 minutes, then shift the concentration to the center of the palm (Lao Gong, P 8), to the appropriate Qi-cavity or the place where massage is carried on.

Rub the palms of hands each other 1-3 minutes and rub the back of one hand with the palm of other hand 1-3 minutes and reverse. See Figure 6.10. There are many Qi-cavities (acupoints) in the hands, which are connected to six major meridians (see Chapter seven). By massaging the hands, the six meridians can be regulated. Further, the activation of Qi-cavities in the hands helps activating other Qi-cavities when the hands rub other areas.

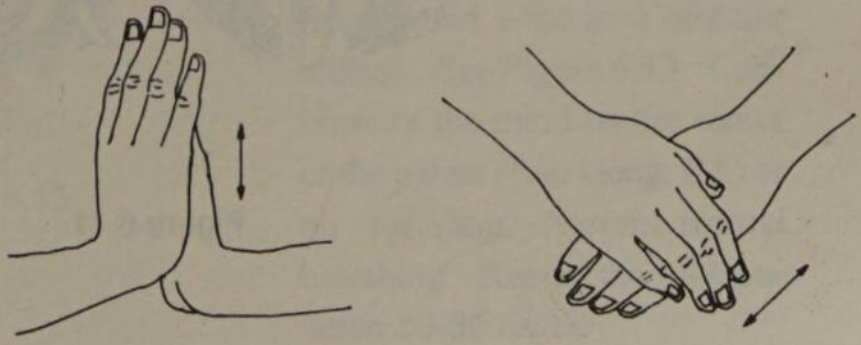


Figure 6.10

14. 按摩功.

6.2.1 Head and Face Qi Gong[15]

(1) Bathe the Face: Take a sitting or standing posture. Close eyes. Raise the tip of the tongue against the back of upper teeth. Place both hands covering the whole face, with the fingers upwards. Rub the face from the top of the forehead down to the chin, then rub face from the chin up to the forehead. See Figure 6.11. Repeat the manipulation 20-30 times, until you feel warm or hot in the hands and/or the face. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing.

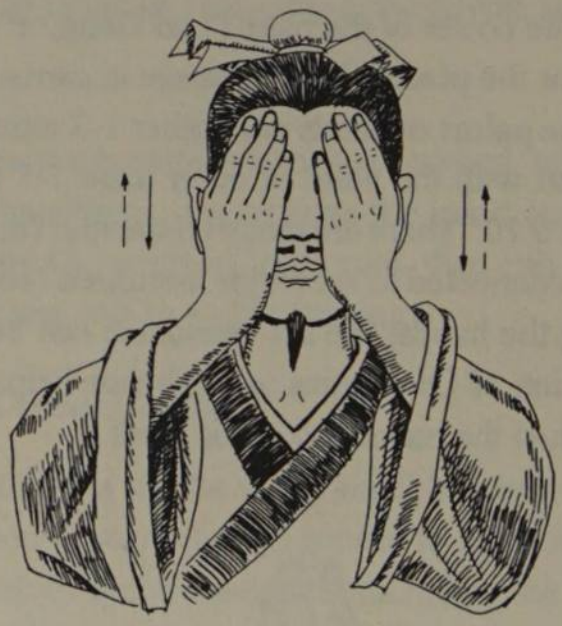


Figure 6.11

15,頭面功.

(2) Comb the Hair: Close the eyes. Keep the five fingers naturally spread and slightly bent. Comb the hair, with the fingers with slight pressure, from the front of head to the back, then comb in the reverse direction. See Figure 6.12. Repeat the manipulation 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the tips of the fingers (Shi Xuan, Extra 30) and assume natural breathing.



Figure 6.12



Figure 6.13

(3) Knead the Temples: Close eyes. Press the temples (Tai Yang, Extra 2) with the whorled surfaces of the index fingers and wipe in a circular motion. See Figure 6,13. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) or on Tai Yang. Assume natural breathing. Repeat the manipulation 20-30 times.

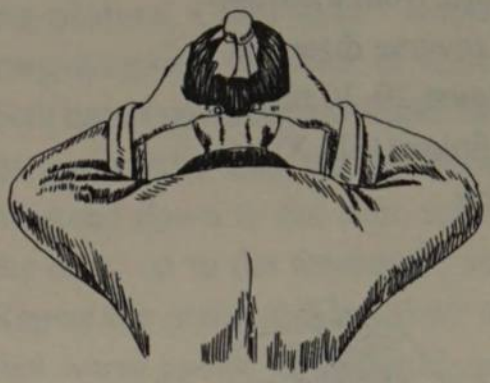


Figure 6.14

(4) Knead Feng Chi: Close the eyes. Place the hands on the sides of the head as if holding a ball. See Figure 6.14. Knead in rotary movements the Qi-cavity Feng Chi (GB 20) with the whorled surface or the tips of the thumbs. Repeat the manipulation 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing.



Figure 6.15

(5) Tapping the Back of the Head: Close the eyes. Place the palms over the ears, with the thumbs on the Qi-cavity Feng Chi (GB 20). Cover the head with the rest of the fingers open and slightly bent and the little fingers facing upward. Using the forefingers (but not the thumbs), gently tap the back of the head 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the Qi-cavities Shi Xuan (tips of the fingers, Extra 30) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.15.

(6) Explanation: this set of manipulations is to regulate the meridians of the head and face, to promote the flow of Qi, to invigorate the brain and to refresh the mind. It has beneficial effects on fatigue,

stress, headache, dizziness, cold, insomnia, amnesia, neurosis, facial paralysis, spasm of the facial muscles and hypertension.

6.2.2 Eye Qi Gong[16]

(1) Knead Zan Zhu: Close the eyes. Place the whorled surfaces of the thumbs on the Qi-cavity Zan Zhu (UB 2, in the depressions just below the inner ends of the eyebrows). Knead gently in small circles or up and down 10-30 times. Concentrate the mind on Zan Zhu and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.16.



Figure 6.16



Figure 6.17

(2) Knead Jing Ming: Place the thumb and the index finger of the right hand (or the left hand) on the Qi-cavity Jing Ming (UB 1, in the depression of the inner angle of the eye). Knead gently 10-30 times. Concentrate the mind on Jing Ming and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.17.

16, 眼功.

(3) Rub Si Bai: Place the index fingers on the Qi-cavity Si Bai (St 2, about 1 inch below the midpoint of the lower margin of the eye). Rub gently 10-30 times. Concentrate the mind on Si Bai and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.18.



Figure 6.18



(a)



Figure 6.19 (b)

(4) Scrape the Orbits: Place the thumbs on the Tai Yang (Extra 2). Bend the index fingers (Figure 6.19a), apply the outer sides against the internal aspects of the upper rim of the eye socket. Scrape from the inner angle to the outer, then scrape the lower margins in the same way. Repeat the manipulation 10-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.19b.

(5) Explanation: This set of manipulations has beneficial effects on regulating the Qi of the Liver Channel, soothing the liver and improving eyesight, and also on juvenile myopia, blurred vision, glaucoma and conjunctival congestion, and other eye diseases.

6.2.3 Ear Qi Gong[17]

(1) Press the Ears: Close the eyes. Press the palms tightly against the ears and then rapidly remove the palms 10-20 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.20.



Figure 6.20

(2) Bathe the Ears: Place the index fingers into the ears. Rotate in several circles and then rapidly pull out. Repeat this 10-20 times. Concentrate the mind on the tips of fingers and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.21.



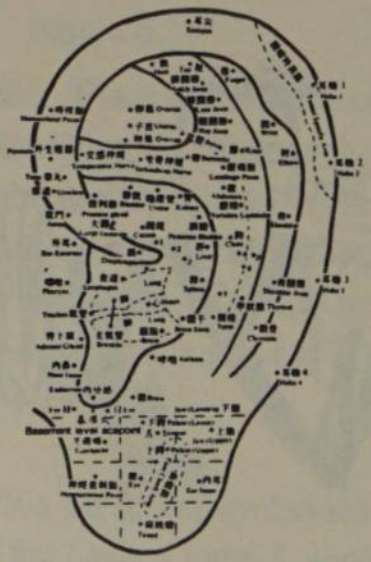
Figure 6.21

(3) Rub the Helix: Pinch the ear margin gently with the thumbs and the radial sides of the index fingers. Rub along the margin from above to below repeatedly 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.22.



Figure 6.22

(4) Explanation: This set of manipulations is designed to dredge the meridians of the ears, and to have beneficial effects on tinnitus, dysacousis, and other ear problems.



The meridians in the ear.

6.2.4 Nose Qi Gong[18]

(1) Knead Ying Xiang: Close the eyes. Place the whorled surfaces of the index and middle fingers on the Qi-cavity Ying Xiang (LI 20). Knead and press them gently 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on Ying Xiang and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.23.



Figure 6.23



Figure 6.24

(2) Rub the Nasal Sides: Place the backs of both thumbs on the two sides of the nose. Rub gently up and down 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the thumbs and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.24.

(3) Explanation: This set of manipulations is to ventilate the nose and to have beneficial effects on cold, stuffy, or running nose, allergic rhinitis, and other nasal conditions.

18, 鼻功.

6.2.5 Upper Limb Qi Gong[19]

(1) Rub the Upper Limbs: Close the eyes. Rub the right palm against the outer side of the left arm from the outer wrist crease up to at the outer side of the shoulder. Then rotate the left hand, rub down from the front of the shoulder, along the inner side, to the inner crease of the wrist. Repeat this manipulation 20-30 times. Change to the other side and repeat 20- 30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.25.

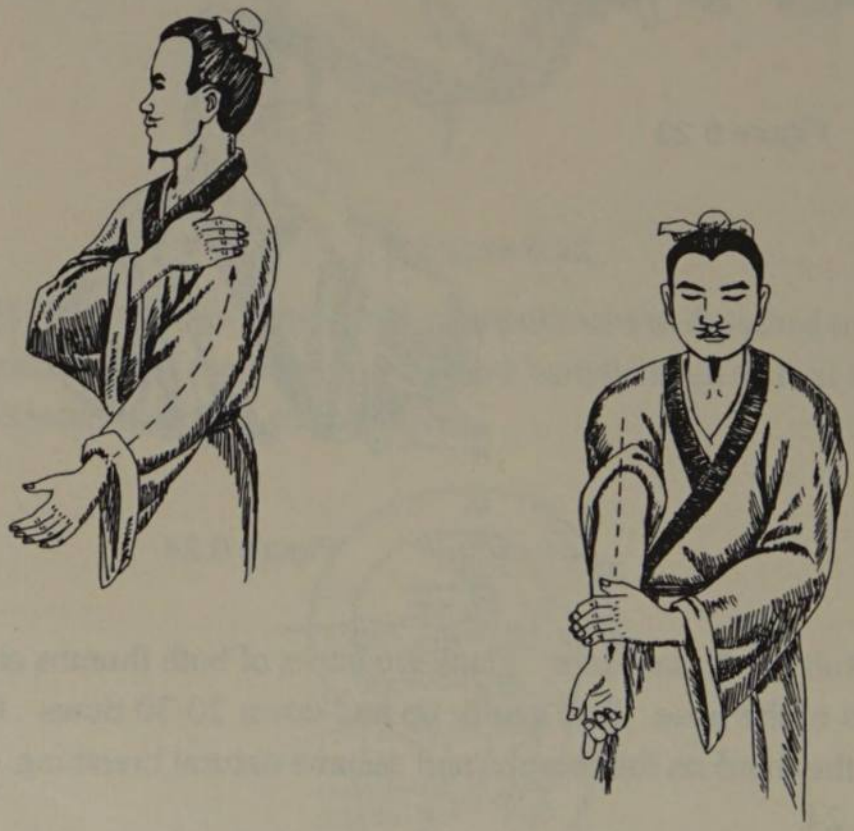


Figure 6.25

19.上肢功.

(2) Press and Knead He Gu: Press and knead the right Qi-cavity He Gu (LI 4) with the left thumb and index finger 20-30 times. Then repeat with the other hand 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on He Gu and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.26.

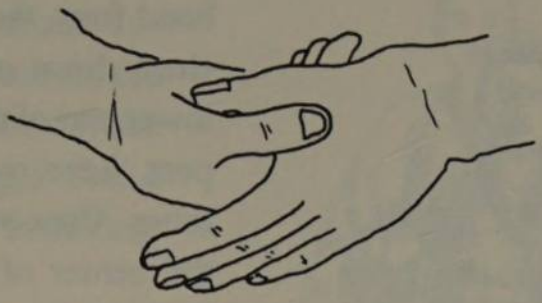
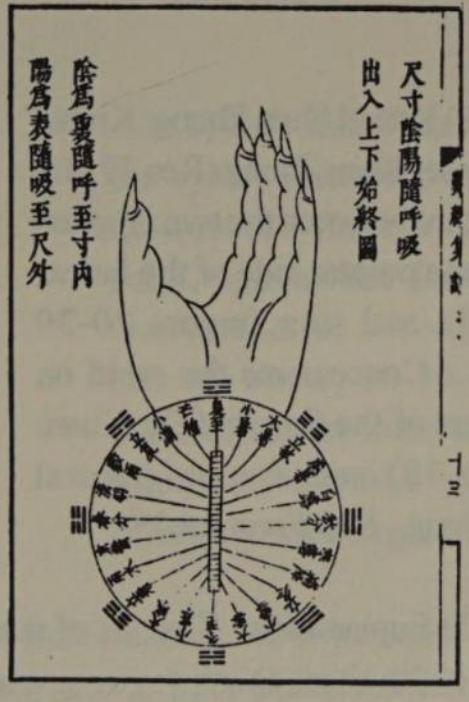


Figure 6.26

(3) Explanation: This set of manipulations is able to regulate the circulation of Qi along the three Yang meridians and the three Yin meridians of the hand, to relax the muscles and to lubricate the joints. It has beneficial effects on pain, numbness, and weakness of the upper limbs, arthritis of shoulder, tennis elbow, tenosynovitis of the wrist, occupational injury of the arms, and other disorders of the upper limbs.



An old drawing of the hand and movement of Qi.

6.2.6 Chest Qi Gong[20]

(1) Rub the Chest: Rub with the left hand against the chest from the top of the left chest down and across to the lower part of the right chest, then rub with the right hand from the top of the right chest down and across to the lower part of the left chest. Repeat these movements 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.27.



Figure 6.27

(2) Knead Shan Zhong: Knead Qi-cavity Shan Zhong (Ren 17, the midpoint between the two nipples) with the palmar side of the index, middle and ring fingers 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the tips of the fingers (Shi Xuan, Extra 30) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.28.

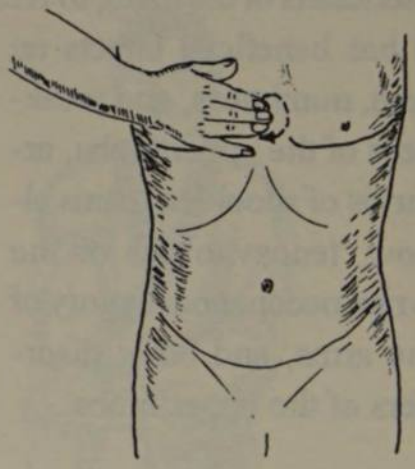


Figure 6.28

(3) Explanation: This set of manipulations is to regulate the flow of Qi in the chest, to improve respiration and to exert beneficial effects on chest pain, bronchitis, congestion, cough, dyspnea, and other chest ailments.

20,胸部功.

6.2.7 Abdomen Qi Gong[21]

(1) Rub the Abdomen: Place the left hand on the left side of the abdomen, rub towards right side and then rub the right hand from the right side of the abdomen towards the left side. Repeat these movements 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.29.



Figure 6.29

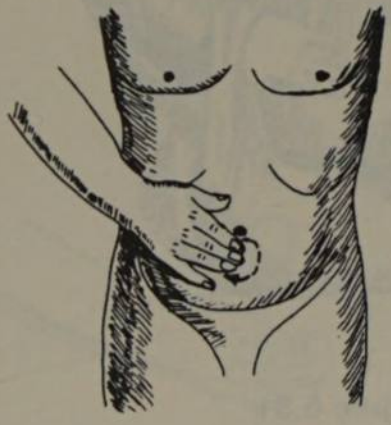


Figure 6.30

(2) Rub Dan Tian: Close the eyes. Rub with a rotary motion the fingers, or the palm, against the Dan Tian area (the lower abdomen below the navel) 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on Dan Tian and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.30.

(3) Explanation: This set of manipulations is to promote Qi, to strengthen the spleen and stomach and to have beneficial effects on duodenal ulcer, gastric ulcer, gastritis, indigestion, constipation, irregular menstruation and impotence.

21,腹部功.

6.2.8 Waist Qi Gong[22]

(1) Rub the Waist: Rub with the palms against the skin of the waist, from the small of the back down to the hip, then back upwards. Repeat these movements 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.31.



Figure 6.31

(2) Explanation: This set of manipulations is to promote the Qi in the kidneys, strengthen the waist and have beneficial effects on fatigue, insomnia, impotence, irregular menstruation, pain and soreness around the waist, degeneration of the lumbar vertebrae, displacement of spinal discs and other back conditions.

22,腰部功.

6.2.9 Lower Limb Qi Gong[23]

(1) Knead the Kneecap: Place the right palm on the right kneecap and the left palm on the left kneecap, knead and pinch in a rotary movement 20-30 times. Concentrate the mind on the center of the palms (Lao Gong, P 8) and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.32.



Figure 6.32

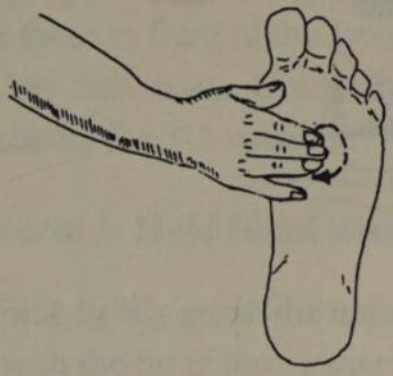


Figure 6.33

(2) Rub Yong Quan: Place the fingers of the left hand on the Qi-cavity Yong Quan (the center of the sole, K 1) of the right foot, with the right hand holding the left foot. Rub rapidly with a rotary motion or up and down motion 20-30 times. Then, change to the other side and repeat it. Concentrate the mind on Yong Quan and assume natural breathing. See Figure 6.33.

23, 下肢功.

(3) Explanation: This set of manipulations is to activate Qi in the kidneys, to promote the flow of Qi in the body, to strengthen the knees and legs, and to alleviate stress, insomnia, arthritis, numbness of the lower limbs and other lower limb disorders.



An old drawing of natural scenery.

6.3 Dong Gong[24] (Dynamic Qi Gong)

Movements of the body and limbs performed in this class of Qi Gong should be gentle, slow, relaxed, coordinated and balanced. The teaching says, "The body should be supple like an infant; the movement should be flexible like a snake; the feeling should be soft like water; the breathing should be smooth like cloud." The mind should be concentrated upon Dan Tian[25] throughout. The three types of most commonly practised dynamic Qi Gong will now be described.

6.3.1 Ba Duan Jin[26] (Eight-Section Brocade)

Literally, Ba means "eight", Duan means "section" and Jin means "brocade". This is a set of Qi Gong exercises consisting of eight forms and devised originally by Zhong Li[27] in the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.). Ba Duan Jin is commonly practised in the sitting position and is easy to learn for all age groups. It can be practised once a day either in the morning or evening.

Preparation: Loosen your belt and garment. Sit upright with eyes closed slightly in the leg-crossing sitting posture, with the right calf crossing over the left calf and the soles of both feet facing obliquely upwards. Relax your whole body, lightly clasp the hands and place them in front of the lower abdomen. Concentrate the mind on the Dan Tian area. Gradually assume deep abdominal respiration. Sit relaxed for 3-5 minutes.

Form 1. Hold Head with Both Hands

First, lightly gnash the upper teeth against the lower ones 36 times, then with the tip of the tongue pressing against the hard palate, pause for 10-20 seconds. When the mouth is full of saliva, swallow it in three parts and mentally send it to Dan Tian. Then, cover the ears with the palms for several seconds, with fingers spreading out like a fan and the little fingers facing upwards, clasping the head. Then,

24,動功. 25,丹田. 26,八段錦. 27,鐘離.

tap the back of the head 24 times, left and right sides, with the middle fingers pressed under the index fingers. See Figure 6.34. Take a deep breath, inhale and exhale gently and evenly.



Figure 6.34

Form 2. Shake the Heavenly Pillar

Place the right palm on the left palm above the navel, thumb side of the right hand facing inside and that of the left hand facing forwards, all fingers slightly bent. Shake the head and shoulders to the right and to the left 24 times. See Figure 6.35.



Figure 6.35

Form 3. Raise Arms and Gargle with Saliva

The arms are held upwards vertically, as though hanging from a horizontal bar. Stir up the tongue 36 times to produce saliva. Rinse the mouth with it. Separate it into three lots as if it were a hard thing, and swallow it, mentally sending it to Dan Tian. Imagine that your heart is kindled by a torch and a flame spreads gradually through the whole body. See Figure 6.36.

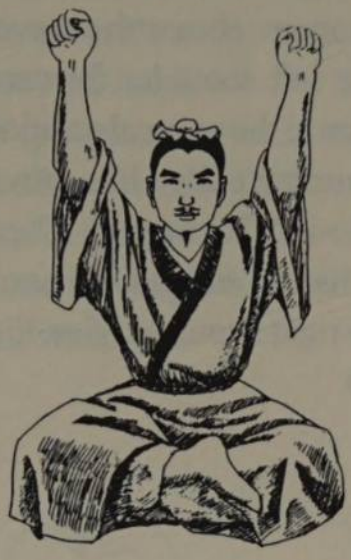


Figure 6.36



Figure 6.37

Form 4. Rub Lower Back

First, rub the two hands against each other until the palms are warm and place them akimbo, with the thumbs pointing forwards and four fingers pointing obliquely downwards. Then, rub the lower back (the kidney areas) up and down 36 times with both hands. See Figure 6.37. Breathe lightly and imagine that the flame in your heart spreads down to the Dan Tian area, producing a feeling of warmth.

Form 5. Turn Torso to One Side

The right hand is placed on the right hip and the left palm on the abdomen above the navel. Turn the left shoulder forward, and return to the original position, with a turning pulley-like movement (lo-lu) 36 times. Then, change hands and do the same with the right shoulder. See Figure 6.38.



Figure 6.38



Figure 6.39

Form 6. Turn Torso to Both Sides

Place both hands on hips. Rotate the shoulders simultaneously 36 times. See Figure 6.39. Imagine that a flame spreads from the lower abdomen up to the waist, and then to the top of the head. Stretch the legs forward, relax the muscles and take three deep breaths.

Form 7. Supporting the Sky

The two hands are joined in front of the abdomen, the palms facing up, the little finger side of the hands touching the body. Breathe out with a sound "Ho...". Interlace the hands above the head in the position of "supporting the sky" (palms upwards), then massage the vertex of the head with hands, and return the palms to the front of the abdomen. Repeat the cycle 3 or 9 times, inhaling when you raise the palms and exhaling when you bring them down. See Figure 6.40.



Figure 6.40

Form 8. Pull toes with both hands

Sit upright with the legs stretched forward, feet shoulder-width apart. Make the two hands like hooks, stretch the arms forward, and take hold of the toes of one foot, pull them back as you push the foot forward. Do this 12 times, and then do the same with the other foot, taking a deep breath slowly each time. See Figure 6.41.



Figure 6.41

Closing: Sit in the cross-legged position quietly for 30 seconds to one minute with the eyes and mouth gently closed. With your tongue stir up saliva, and swallow it quickly. Repeat 6 times. Then, shrug your shoulders and twist your waist, relax your whole body. Finally, concentrate the mind on Dan Tian, mentally leading Qi from Dan Tian along the Ren meridian down to the Qi-cavity Hui Yin (Ren 1) to meet with the Du meridian, then along the spinal column to the termination of the Du meridian in mouth.

Explanation: Ba Duan Jin is a very popular fitness exercise. Persistent long term practice can clear up the Jing Luo system (the meridians) through which Qi circulates. It is effective in increasing the appetite, ensuring a sound sleep, promoting well-being, and strengthening the immune system to combat disease. This type of Qi Gong is suitable for general good health and longevity.

6.3.2 The Five-Animal Play[28]

The five-animal play (the tiger, bear, deer, ape and bird) was initiated by Hua Tuo[29] (208 A.D.), one of best known physicians in traditional Chinese medicine. The practitioner can select any one of these animal play exercises or practise the five together in succession.

Form 1. The Tiger Play

Stand with the feet shoulder width apart, bend the knees, trunk and head slightly. Make fists and place them in front of belly, with the eyes staring at the fists, imitating a tiger with power and awe. Move the fists close together to the middle. See Figure 6.42. Breathe in deeply and then breathe out slowly (long breathing, see Chapter three). Then, move back to the natural standing posture (see Chapter three), open the fists and move hands back. Concentrate the mind on Dan Tian. Repeat the movements 5-15 times. Or move the body forward by small steps with the same movements.



Figure 6.42

28, 五禽戲. 29, 華佗.

Form 2. The Bear Play



Figure 6.43

Take the natural standing posture (see Chapter three). Hold the breath, raise the right fist overhead and place the left fist in front of the hip. Move the left foot forward slowly like a heavy giant bear. Breathe out slowly. After a short pause, do the same movements, but with the left fist overhead and the right foot forward. Repeat the movements 5-15 times. See Figure 6.43.

Form 3. The Deer Play

Take the natural standing posture (see Chapter three). Place both fists in front of the belly. Hold the breath, turn the head to the left to look back. Raise the right heel off the ground and put the heel down immediately to produce a shock through whole body. Breathe out slowly. Then, do the same but with the head turned back on the right side and the left heel off the ground. Repeat the movements 5-15 times. See Figure 6.44.



Figure 6.44

holding a branch. Turn the head to the right, raise the right heel off the ground. After a short pause, breathe out slowly. Do the same again but on the reverse side. Repeat the movements 5-15 times. See Figure 6.45.



Figure 6.45

Form 5. The Bird Play

Take the natural standing posture (see Chapter three). Hold the breath, raise both hands held together overhead, keep the trunk erect as if a bird ready to take wing. After a short pause, breathe out slowly and move the hands down. Repeat the movements 5-15 times. See Figure 6.46.



Figure 6.46

Explanation: This set of Qi Gong exercises is used to improve the circulation of Qi and blood, promote muscle activity, strengthen the joints and bones, and regulate the internal organs. It is particularly recommended to patients who suffer chronic diseases and terminal illnesses.

6.3.3 Tai Ji Qi Gong Eighteen Forms[30]

This set of maneuvers is derived from the famous ancient Chinese discipline Tai Ji Chuan[31]. It has absorbed the good qualities of the movements of Tai Ji Chuan and integrated them with the basic requirements of Qi Gong training. There are 18 forms and each form has its special requirements for body movements, respiration and mind control, so each form can be viewed as an independent exercise. All eighteen forms can be either undertaken successively in one session or performed separately. The practitioner should learn not only how to do the movements, but also how to control the mind and breathing.

Form 1. Start the Exercise and Regulate the Breath

(1) Stand with the feet parallel and spaced at the shoulder-width or a little wider, the spine straight, the abdomen pulled inward, the eyes looking straight forward and the shoulder joints relaxed, allowing the arms and hands droop naturally. See Figure 6.47.



Figure 6.47

30,太極氣功十八式. 31,太極拳.



Figure 6.48

(2) Raise the arms upward in parallel to a level a little higher than the shoulders with the elbows extended and the palms facing the ground. At the same time inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.48.

(3) Bend the knees about 150 degrees with the kneecaps level with the tips of the toes, and move the arms downward slowly to the level of the navel, as if pressing a floating ball into water with both hands. At the same time exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.49.



Figure 6.49

(4) Repeat above sequence (Figure 6.50) 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 2. While doing these movements, try to imagine that your body is moving up and down smoothly, and continuously like water moving in a fountain.

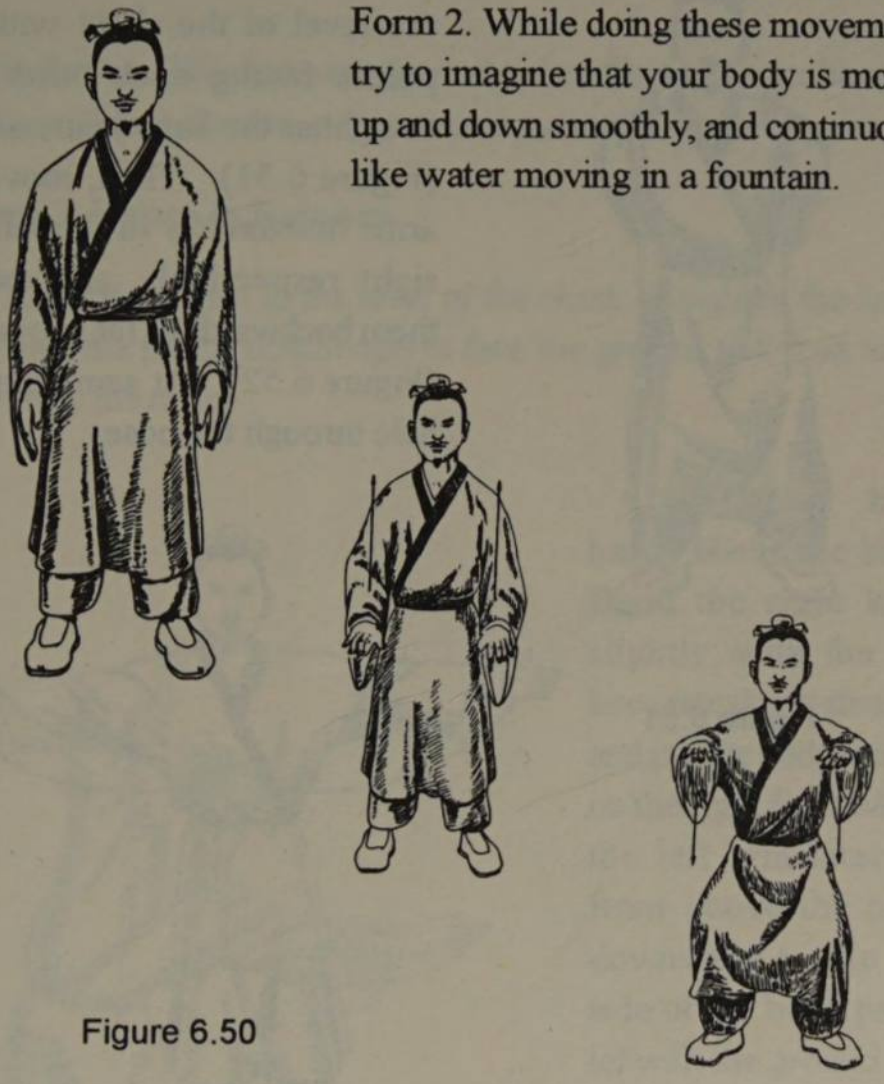


Figure 6.50

Explanation: These movements combined with the imagery of water help mobilize the Zhen Qi in the body, harmonize the functions of Qi and blood, and promote their circulation in the meridians, so that the Qi can spread over the entire body like spreading of the waves. This form is recommended for people of weak constitution or those who are recovering from some illness, and patients suffering from hypertension, heart disease, and hepatitis.

Form 2. Broaden the Mind



Figure 6.51

(1) Raise the arms parallel to the level of the chest with the palms facing each other and straighten the knee joints slowly (Figure 6.51). Then, move the arms horizontally to the left and right respectively, and extend them backwards as far as possible (Figure 6.52). At same time inhale through the nose.



Figure 6.52

(2) Draw the arms inward horizontally to bring the hands to the front of the chest with the palms facing the ground. Bend the knees and move the arms downward as if pressing something down. At the same time exhale through the mouth.

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 3. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are standing on top of a high mountain and viewing distant scenery.

Explanation: This form is reported to be effective for pulmonary emphysema, heart disease, neurasthenia, neurosis, etc.

Form 3. Dance in Rainbow

(1) Raise the hands to the level of the chest, straighten the knees slowly, turn the palms downward to face the ground and start to inhale through the nose.



Figure 6.53

(2) Raise both hands above the head. Bend the right knee slightly, with the left knee remaining straight, and put the body weight on the right foot. Move the left arm laterally from above the head downward to the left side of the body parallel with the ground and turn the left palm upward. At the same time, bend the right elbow, turn the right palm to face the ground and continue to inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.53.

(3) Raise both hands above the head. Bend the left knee slightly, straighten the right knee and shift the body weight to the left foot. Move the right arm laterally from above the head downward to the right side of the body parallel with the ground and turn the right palm upward. At the same time, bend the left elbow, raise the left hand above the head with the left palm facing the ground and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.54.



Figure 6.54

(4) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 4. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are dancing in a very beautiful rainbow with great joy.

Explanation: This form is reported to be effective for low back pain, kidney diseases, etc.

Form 4. Wield the Arms to Move Clouds

(1) Center the body weight between the feet and bend both knees as if riding a horse. Move the left arm downwards along the right chest to the lower part of the abdomen, at the same time move the right arm upward first and then downward along the left chest to the lower part of the abdomen. Cross the arms with the left one in front of the right and both palms facing the abdomen.

(2) Turn the both palms to face upwards, straighten the knees and move the crossed arms upward above the head. At the same time inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.55.



Figure 6.55

(3) Move the arms laterally with the elbows straight and the palms facing outwards. Then pull the arms downwards along either side of the body and cross them in front of the lower part of the abdomen. At the same time, bend the knees and exhale through the month. See Figure 6.56.



Figure 6.56

(4) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 5. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are flying in the sky and joyfully parting the clouds with your hands.

Explanation: This form helps cultivate Yuan Qi and strengthen the joints and muscles of waist and legs. It is reported to be effective for heart disease, asthma, periarthritis of the shoulder, etc.

Form 5. Push and Pull the Hands Alternately

(1) Maintain the crouching posture. Raise the left hand to the level of the chest and extend it straight forward with the palm facing upwards. At the same time, raise the right hand along the side of the body to the level of the right ear with the palm upright and inhale through the nose.

(2) Pull the left hand back to the left side of the waist and extend the right hand straight forward as if pushing open a window. At the same time exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.57.



Figure 6.57

(3) Turn the palm of the right hand to face upwards. Raise the left hand to the level of the left ear with its palm upright. Pull the right hand back to the right side of the waist and extend the left hand straight forward as if pushing open a window. At the same time, inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.58.



Figure 6.58

(4) Repeat the movements (2) and (3), alternating left and right 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 6. While doing these movements, turn your head to gaze at the pushing hand and imagine that you are standing on a beach and watching the waves slowly come and go.

Explanation: This form is effective against arthritis of shoulder, elbow and wrist, asthma, tracheitis, kidney diseases, etc.

Form 6. Row a Boat on the Lake

(1) Extend both hands straight forward with the palms facing upwards, inhale through the nose. Then, turn the palms to face the ground, bend the knees further and pull the hands downwards and backwards as much as possible, as if rowing a boat. At the same time, exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.59.

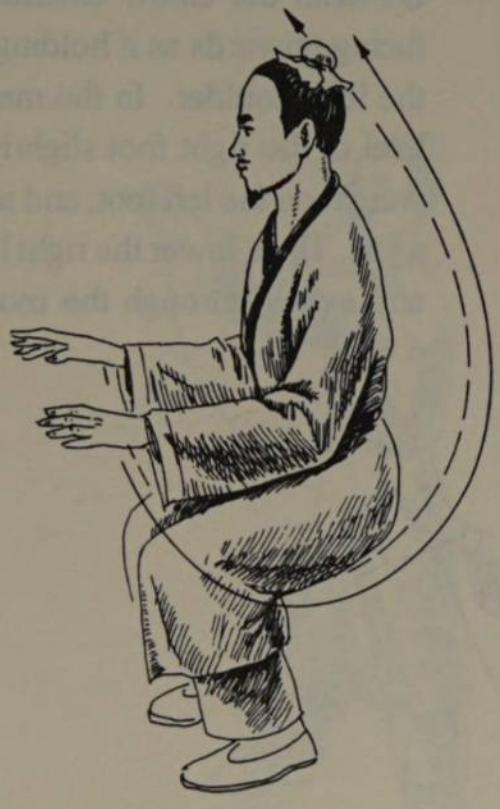


Figure 6.59

(2) Straighten the knees, move the hands upwards from the sides of the body to the chest with the palms facing upwards. Extend the hands straight forward and, at the same time, inhale through the nose.

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 7. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are rowing a boat on the peaceful lake leisurely and joyfully.

Explanation: This form is effective against chronic gastro-enteritis, heart disease, neurasthenia, etc.

Form 7. Hold a Ball in Front of the Shoulder

(1) Following the previous form when the hands were pulled backwards with the knees bent, straighten the knees and raise the right hand from the right side of the body and extend it to the left to the level of the left shoulder with the elbow extended and the palm facing upwards as if holding a ball in front of the left shoulder. In the meantime, raise the heel of the right foot slightly to set the body weight on the left foot, and inhale through the nose. Then, lower the right heel to the ground and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.60.



Figure 6.60

(2) Place the body weight on the right foot and raise the left heel slightly. Pull the right hand back to the right side of the body, raise the left hand from the left side of the body and extend it to the right to the level of the right shoulder with the elbow extended and the palm facing upwards, as if holding a ball in front of the right shoulder. In the meantime, raise the right heel slightly to set the body weight on the left foot and inhale through the nose. Then, lower the left heel and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.61.



Figure 6.61

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 8. While doing these movements, move the eyes to gaze at the ball-holding hand, imagining that you are back to your childhood.

Explanation: This form is good for stiffness and pain in shoulders and limbs.

Form 8. Turn the Torso and Watch the Moon

(1) Bend the knees to adopt the horse riding posture. Extend and move both arms upward and to the left with the upper part of the body turning to the left and the head extended backwards, as if watching the moon in the sky, meanwhile inhaling through the nose. Then, lower the arms back to either side of the body, and return the head and torso to their preceding postures, exhaling through the mouth. See Figure 6.62.



Figure 6.62

(2) The same as movement (1), but with left and right reversed.

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 9. While doing these movements, try to think of the great happiness and joy while reuniting with all the family members and enjoying the moonlight on Mid-Autumn festival night.

Explanation: This form helps to enhance the functions of the spleen and kidneys. It is reported to be effective for low back pain, weight loss, etc.

Form 9. Twist the Waist and Push the Palms

(1) Maintain the horse-riding posture. Place the hands close to either side of the waist with the palms facing upwards. Pull the left elbow backwards and turn the waist to the left. Turn down the right palm, extend the right arm pushing the right hand forcibly to the left, and breathe out through the mouth. Then, pull the right hand back to the right side of the waist and breathe in through the nose. See Figure 6.63.



Figure 6.63



Figure 6.64

(2) Do the same as movement (1), but with left and right reversed. See Figure 6.64.

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go to on Form 10. While doing these movements, try to think that you are inhaling Qi to improve your health.

Explanation: This form is reported to be effective for low back pain and stiffness in limbs.

Form 10. Move the Hands Up and Down with Horse-Riding Step

(1) Still in the horse-riding posture, raise the left hand along the midline of the body to the level of the face with the palm facing the eyes, and place the right hand in front of the navel with the palm facing to the left. Then, move the left hand slowly to the left with the torso and head turning in the same direction and fixing the gaze on the left palm. The right hand move to the left and upright. At the same time, inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.65.





Figure 6.65

(2) Raise the right hand along the midline of the body to the level of the face with the palm facing the eyes and place the left hand in front of the navel with the palm facing to the right. Then move the right hand slowly to the right with the torso and head turning in the same direction and fixing the gaze on the palm. At the same time, exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.66.



Figure 6.66

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 11. While doing these movements, imagine that you are riding a horse with the mind-body and limbs relaxed.

Explanation: This form is reported to be effective for neurasthenia, neurosis, chronic gastrointestinal diseases, etc.

Form 11. Dredge in the Sea and Look at the Sky

(1) Step out with the left foot. Bend the left knee with the upper part of the body inclined forwards and arms crossed in front of the left knee, starting to inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.67.



Figure 6.67

(2) Raise the crossed arms upwards above the head along with the rising of the torso. Extend the arms laterally with the palms facing each other and the head extended backwards to look at the sky, and continue inhaling. See Figure 6.68.



Figure 6.68

(3) Move the left foot back with the arms pulled down to either side of the body, and exhale through the mouth.

(4) Do the movements from (1) to (3), but with the left and right foot reversed.

(5) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 12. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are fishing in the sea and scooping fish out of the net with great joy and excitement.

Explanation: This form helps to enhance the functions of the spleen and kidneys. It is reported to be effective for chronic gastrointestinal diseases, promoting weight loss, etc.

Form 12. Push Forward Waves and Promote Billows

(1) Raise the arms in parallel to the level of the chest with the elbows extended. Then, bend the elbows to pull the hands back in front of the chest with the palms facing forwards and inhale through the nose.

(2) Step out with the left foot. Bend the right knee, raise the heel of the right foot and incline the upper part of the body forwards to transfer the body weight onto the left foot. Push the hands forward and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.69.

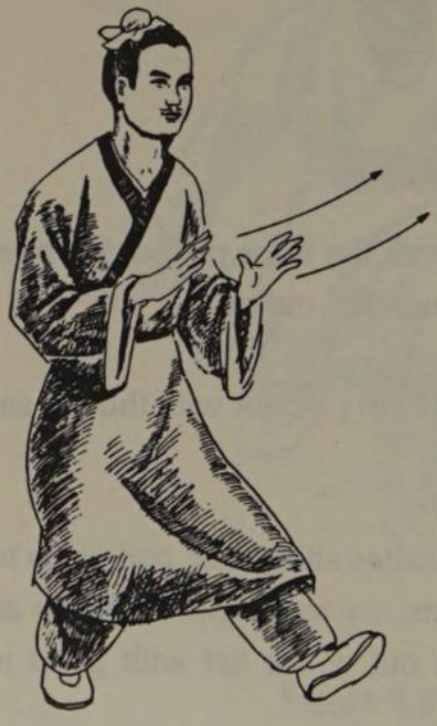


Figure 6.69

(3) Pull the hands back in front of the chest with the palms facing forwards. Meanwhile, straighten the left leg, lower the right heel, bring the torso upright and the body weight back onto both feet, and inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.70.



Figure 6.70

(4) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 13. While doing these movements, try to think of the waves rolling forward in the sea.

Explanation: This form helps strengthen the functions of the liver and spleen. It is reported to be effective for hepatitis, pulmonary diseases, neurasthenia, insomnia, etc.

Form 13. The Flying Dove Spreads its Wings

(1) Keep the arms extended and parallel in front of the chest and turn the palms to face each other. Step out with the left foot with the knee bent slightly. Transfer the body weight onto the right foot and raise the toes of the left foot. Move the arms horizontally to either side of the body and pull them backwards as much as possible. At the same time inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.71.



Figure 6.71

(2) Transfer the body weight onto the left foot and raise the heel of the right foot. Move the arms forward horizontally to meet in front of the chest with the palms facing each other and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.72.

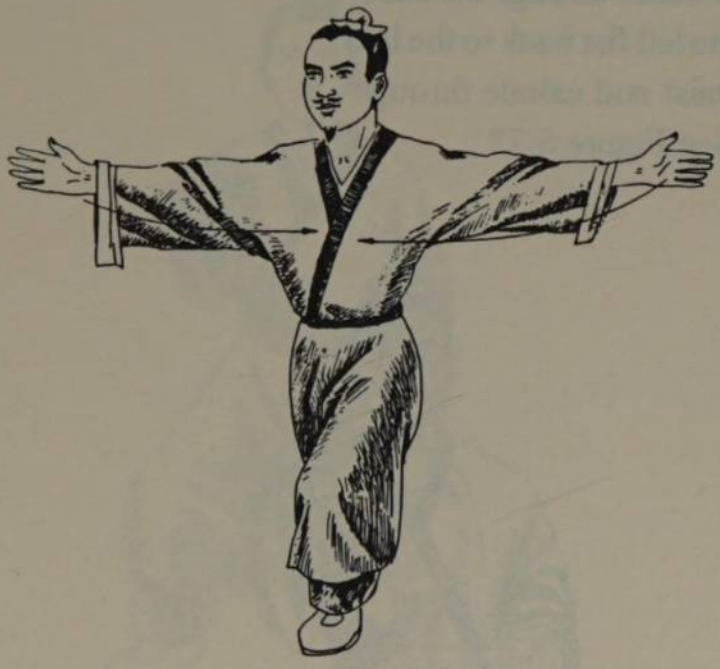


Figure 6.72

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 14. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are flying in the sky like a bird and you are stretching your wings and breathing the fresh air with great joy.

Explanation: This form helps strengthen the functions of the liver and spleen. It is reported to be effective for hepatitis, pulmonary disease, heart disease, neurasthenia, etc.

Form 14. Stretch the Arms and Thrust the Fists

(1) Pull the left foot back and bend both knees to adopt the horse-riding posture. Place the hands on either side of the waist. Curve the fingers to make fists with the backs of the hands facing the ground.

(2) Forcibly extend the left fist straight, turning the back of the hand facing up, and inhale through the nose. Then, draw the left fist back to the left side of the waist and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.73.



Figure 6.73

(3) Forcibly extend the right fist straight forward, turning the back of the hand facing up, and inhale through the nose. Then, draw the right fist back to the right side of the waist and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.74.



Figure 6.74

(4) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 15. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are doing Gong Fu (Kung Fu) (the martial art) with the utmost energy.

Explanation: This form helps increase the internal energy, cultivate Yuan Qi and enlarge the vital capacity of the lungs. It is reported to be effective for asthma, bronchitis, neurasthenia, neurosis, insomnia, etc.

Form 15. The Wild Goose Flies in the Sky

(1) Straighten the knees and stand upright with the hands hanging naturally at the sides. Then, raise the hands laterally with the palms facing the ground to form a horizontal line with the arms and shoulders. See Figure 6.75.



Figure 6.75

(2) Bend the knees and lower the seat to crouch as deeply as possible. At the same time, move the hands downwards slowly and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.76.

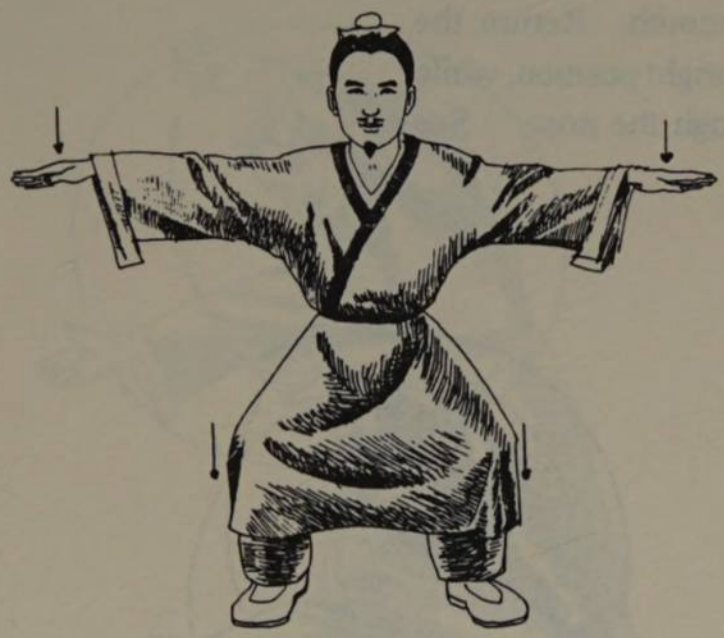


Figure 6.76

(3) Straighten the knees and raise the seat to upright. At the same time, raise the heels, move the hands upwards and inhale through the nose.

(4) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 16. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are flying in the sky freely and leisurely.

Explanation: This form is reported to be effective for dizziness, neurasthenia, neurosis, etc.

Form 16. Rotate a Flying Wheel with the Arms

(1) Stand upright and stretch both arms up above the head.

(2) Rotate both arms from the left to the right. Bend the body from the left, forward and to the right successively, while exhaling through the mouth. Return the arms to the upright position, while inhaling through the nose. See Figure 6.77.



Figure 6.77

(3) Rotate both arms from the right to the left. Bend the body from the right, forward and to the left successively, while exhaling through the mouth. Return the arms to the upright position, while inhaling through the nose. See Figure 6.78.



Figure 6.78

(4) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 17. While doing these movements, try to think of a windmill rotating slowly in spring breezes.

Explanation: This form helps promote the circulation of Qi and blood. It is reported to be effective for chronic arthritis, weight loss, etc.

Form 17. Bounce a Ball and Step the Foot

(1) Lift the left leg, with the right hand raised over the right shoulder, as bouncing a ball. Then, lower the left leg to the ground, with the right hand dropping back to the side, and inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.79.



Figure 6.79

(2) Lift the right leg, with the left hand raised over the left shoulder, as bouncing a ball. Then, lower the right leg to the ground, with the left hand dropping back to the side, and exhale through the mouth.

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and go on to Form 18. While doing these movements, try to imagine that you are playing with a ball like a little boy or a little girl.

Explanation: This form is reported to be effective for neurasthenia, insomnia, etc.

Form 18. Press Down the Palms and Quiet the Breath

(1) Stand with the feet parallel and spread at shoulder-width, bend both knees slightly. Place the hands to either side of the body with the palms facing upwards. Raise the hands up in front of the eyes with the body standing upright, and inhale through the nose. See Figure 6.80.



Figure 6.80

(2) Turn the palms to face the ground with the fingertips of one hand opposite to those of the other hand. Press the hands downward to the level of the lower part of the abdomen with the knees bent slightly, and exhale through the mouth. See Figure 6.81.

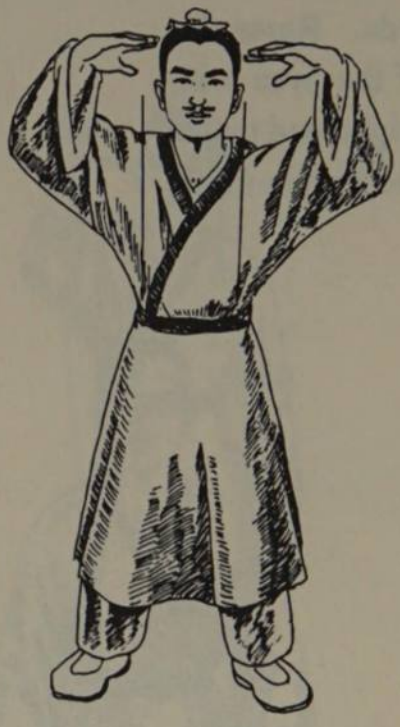


Figure 6.81

(3) Repeat above sequence 6 times altogether, and end the exercise calmly. While doing these movements, try to imagine your whole body weightless and relaxed completely.

Explanation: This form is reported to be effective for chronic gastrointestinal diseases, hypertension, heart disease, etc.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BASES OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE



The heaven needs Yin and Yang;
the earth needs softness and hardness;
the man needs mercy and justice;
– these three elements are also interrelated,
and based on the balance of two opposites.

— I Ching (Yi Jing) (24th century B.C.)

In traditional Chinese medicine, Qi is the only vital force or vital energy which maintains our life, and supports the functions of our mind and body, such as the brain to think, the eyes to see, the nose to smell, the tongue to taste, the ears to hear, the limbs to move, etc. Qi has its foundation in traditional Chinese medicine which directs all the theories. In the matter of how Qi or Qi Gong works, particularly in relation to its therapeutic value, it is impossible to find the answers without knowing the major theories of traditional Chinese medicine. First, we should realize that the theories of traditional Chinese medicine are totally different from those of today's Western medicine. Historically, in the beginning, anatomy was much based upon actual observation of individual organs and parts of the body, as evidenced by the fairly accurate descriptions of the internal organs found in many early medical classics. However, later and for a long period, it was believed that this early knowledge was sufficient to allow the successful practice of medicine, on the other hand, the explanation and exploration of the human body functions were more emphasized on the unity and integrity of mind-body-soul, the balance of Qi, the prevention of disease and harmony with nature.

The following is a very brief description of the basic knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine. Incidentally, it normally takes many

years to learn this basic knowledge. The first traditional medical training school was set up 7th century A.D. Today there are two types of medical schools in China: one is the Western medical school and the other is the traditional Chinese medical school. Both schools require five or six years full-time study.

The theories of Yin-Yang[1], Five Elements[2], Zang-Fu[3] (the internal organs or viscera), Qi, blood and body fluid , and Jing Luo[4] (channels and collaterals, commonly known as meridians) are the most important basic theories in traditional Chinese medicine. The general rationale is that a person's well-being is dependent on the state of Qi, which is determined by certain factors, such as the balance of Yin and Yang, the condition of the five elements, the function of Zang Fu, the conductivity of meridians. All the factors will inevitably bring changes in Qi qualitatively and quantitatively, such as whether Qi moves fast or slow; whether Qi is stagnant or even stops; whether Qi is strong, normal or weak; whether Qi is in sufficiency or insufficiency.

7.1 Qi, Blood and Body Fluid

In traditional Chinese medicine, the Qi, blood and body fluid are closely related to each other, and the latter two are often referred as the "essential substances for Qi".

Qi

Qi refers mostly to the "energy", but in certain circumstances, it refers to substance and function as well. For example, when speaking of Da Qi[5] (the Qi from air) and Gu Qi[6] (the Qi from the essence of food), they are referring to substances; when speaking of the Qi of certain organs such as the Qi of the heart, liver, spleen, lungs, kidneys and stomach, they are referring to function.

Based on the distribution, source and function, there are different kinds of Qi inside the body each with a different physiological sig-

1,陰陽. 2,五行學說. 3,臟腑. 4,經絡. 5,大氣. 6,谷氣.

nificance (see Chapter one).

Blood

In traditional Chinese medicine, the exact sense of blood is different from that of Western medical term. Nevertheless, blood is regarded as a definite substance. Blood is originated from the essence of food and the essence of the kidneys. The essence of food, which is digested and absorbed by the spleen and stomach, is transported to the heart and lungs, and then transformed into red blood. The essence from the kidneys, in the form of bone marrow, transforms into the blood. The Qi of the kidneys strengthens the function of the spleen, stomach, heart and lungs in promoting the process of blood formation. The blood in the vessels circulates all over the body to nourish and promote the functional activities of all tissues and organs.

The formation and circulation of blood are dependent on Qi as the energy, while the formation and function of Qi are related to the supply of blood. Deficiency of Qi often leads to deficiency of blood, while the deficiency of blood, in turn, often causes deficiency of the Qi.

Body Fluid

There are two types of fluid in the body: one is the lucid, thin fluid which permeates the muscles and skin to warm and nourish the muscles and to moisten the skin; the other is the turbid, viscous fluid which supplies the joint cavities, brain and body orifices to lubricate the joints, to reinforce the brain and moisten the orifices.

7.2 Jing[7], Qi and Shen[8]

First of all, we should understand the three primary vitalities in our body, "Jing", "Qi" and "Shen", known as "the three treasures", and their interrelation. In a broad sense, they are inseparable.

7,精. 8,神.

Jing

This literally means "essence". In traditional Chinese medicine, Jing is regarded as the substance of the body and the endowment of life, which includes:

(1) the sperm, known as Jing Zi[9] (literally, "the essence of son");
(2) the blood, known as a nutrient of the body;
(3) the primary vitality which is inherited from the parents;
(4) the biochemical ingredients, like the hormones from the endocrine system and the secretions from the exocrine system.

After birth, the Jing normally is stored in the kidneys, known as "the root of Jing". It is believed that Jing comes from two sources primarily: the parents and the food we eat. Weakness, insufficiency or exhaustion of Jing are mainly caused by irresponsible or unhealthy parents and defects in one's personal life style, such as the amount of stress, poor nutrition, intemperate eating and drinking, abusing drugs, lack of sleep, overwork, sickness, etc. The most common signs of problems with Jing are premature aging, sexual difficulties, fatigue, insomnia, soreness and pain in the waist, neurasthenia, etc.

Qi

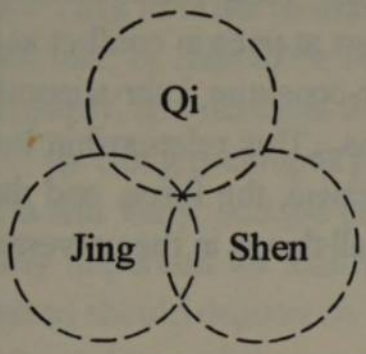
This is "the life force" or "the energy necessary" to support body system functioning, comparable to the power running a machine. Qi can activate and nourish the process of Jing. On the other hand, Qi can be partially transformed from Jing in the kidneys, known as Yuan Qi[10], which will primarily function in reproduction and inter-link with other Qi(s).

Shen

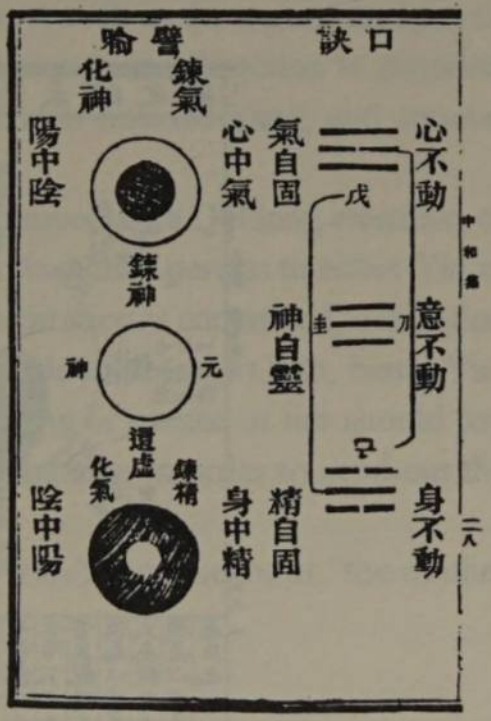
This literally means "spirit" which reflects the mind. Often both the spirit and the mind are referred as one single identity, known as

9,精子. 10,元氣.

Xin-Shen[11] (Xin literally means the mind). The function of Xin-Shen or spirit is cultivated by both Qi and Jing, as it is often said, "Our mental health is dependent on our physical health."



The relationship of Jing, Qi and Shen.



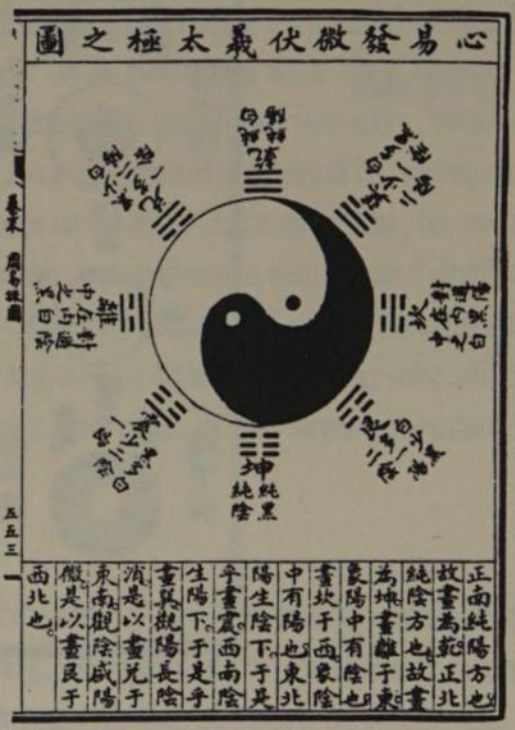
An old diagram of interaction among Jing, Qi and Shen.

In Qi Gong exercises, it will be extremely difficult to control and strengthen the Qi if we do not take into consideration the Jing and the Shen. So a proper diet, a good regulated sexual life, mental stability, and a positive attitude to life are all crucial for a successful training in Qi Gong.

11, 心-神.

7.3 Yin-Yang[12]

The theory of Yin-Yang expounds "the mechanism of changes". It holds that every object or identity or phenomenon in the universe is composed of two opposite aspects: "Yin" and "Yang", and is a mixture of the two. The Yin and Yang are always at once in conflict and in interdependence and meanwhile they inter-consume, inter-support, and inter-transform under certain conditions. This relationship between Yin and Yang is the principle, the cause, the force, and the balance for the flourishing and perishing of all things in the universe.



An old diagram of Yin–Yang and Tai Ji.

Male and female, or fire and water, as the symbols, are used to explain the basic properties of Yang and Yin, respectively, but in a most comprehensive form. They stand for heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, day and night, heat and cold, positive and negative,

12. 陰陽.

gaining Yang, but, on the other hand, the absorbing and storing of the nutrient substances depend on certain functional activities, a process of gaining Yin and consuming Yang.

There must be a balance or dynamic equilibrium between Yin and Yang in order to maintain a good health. If the balance is upset and lost, or fails to be restored, the health of mind-body will be in jeopardy, and diseases will even occur.

Qi Gong training is practised under the principle of the theory of Yin and Yang, and the balance of them. This implication is particularly important for skillful Qi Gong practitioners. The training selected should depend on many factors, such as the mental and physical condition of the practitioner, the time and direction to practise, etc. For example, "Spring and summer nourish Yang, and autumn and winter nourish Yin."

On the other hand, various maneuvers of a Qi Gong exercise, or even various types of Qi Gong exercises may pertain to either Yin or Yang. For example, as far as the respiration is concerned, exhalation sends Qi out, being Yang, while inhalation brings Qi in, being Yin. Therefore, those with hyperactive Yang or excess of fire should pay more attention to the practice of exhalation in order to send out the excessive fire.

In short, Qi Gong balances the Yin-Yang, known as "the mother of Yin-Yang".

7.4 The Five Elements[14]

The theory of the Five Elements holds that "wood", "fire", "earth", "metal" and "water" are basic materials constituting the material world. Based on the properties of these materials, all things in the world, including the natural environment such as weather changes, geographic conditions, etc., can be classified into five categories, corresponding to the Five Elements, and functionally they inter-promote and inter-conquer each other in a mutual order. They are in a continual succession of changes, such as in the order of promoting:

14, 五行.

- wood promotes fire;
- fire promotes earth;
- earth promotes metal;
- metal promotes water;
- and water in turn promotes wood.

In this order of cyclical succession, each element is in the position of not only "promoting", but also "being promoted". The promoting element is thought to be the "mother" and the promoted element to be the "son", forming what is known as the "mother-son" relationship.

On the other hand, they are in the order of conquering:

- wood conquers earth;
- earth conquers water;
- water conquers fire;
- fire conquers metal;
- and metal in turn conquers wood.

In this interrelation, each of the Five Elements occupies the position of "being conquered or destroyed" and also "conquering and destroying". In the complicated relation among things, neither promotion nor conquest is dispensable. Without promotion there would be no birth and development; while without conquest, excessive growth would result in harm.

In addition to these two basic relationships or orders among the Five Elements, there are still other subtle changes, such as overacting and counteracting. Overacting will take place as a form of launching an attack only when a counterpart is weak, whereas counteracting implies preying upon the counterpart. For example, when wood is in excess, it not only overacts on earth, but also counteracts on metal. The relations among the Five Elements are illustrated in Figure 7.1.

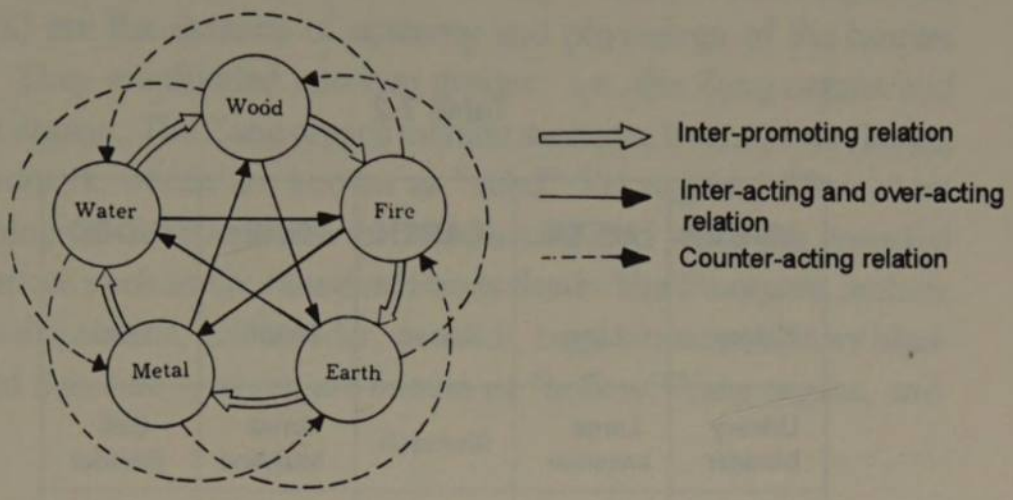


Figure 7.1

In traditional Chinese medicine, functionally, all the tissues, parts and organs of the body can be classified into five categories which correspond to the Five Elements. For example, the heart refers to fire, the liver refers wood, the kidneys refer to water, etc. Furthermore they are related in a complex system of arrangement to color, taste, odor, etc. They are in a mutual order of inter-promoting, inter-conquering, overacting and counteracting. Table 7.2. shows the five categories of tissues, parts and organs of the body, and other factors, according to the characters of the Five Elements.

Furthermore, each organ is able to communicate with some other organs or parts near the surface of the body, such as the heart communicating with the tongue, the liver with the eyes, the kidneys with the ears. The theory of Five Elements is primarily used to explain the symptoms, etiology, mechanism and prognosis of disease. For example, a greenish tinge in the eyes and complexion, associated with a preference for sour food, suggests liver trouble (wood); a florid complexion, associated with a bitter taste in the mouth, suggests heart trouble (fire). Also, if a patient suffers from heart illness (fire), in company with an abnormally dark complexion (water) and with a ringing, roaring, or hissing sound in one or both ears, it suggests that

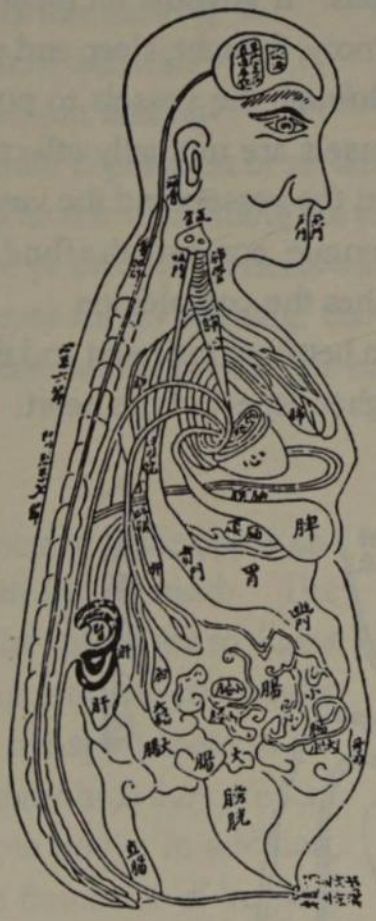
the heart illness is due to disorder of the kidneys. This is often explained as excess water (kidneys) acting on fire (heart).

Table 7.2

WATER	METAL	EARTH	FIRE	WOOD
Kidney	Lung	Spleen	Heart	Liver
Urinary Bladder	Large Intestine	Stomach	Small Intestine	Gall Bladder
Hearing (Ear)	Smell (Nose)	Taste (Mouth)	Words (Tongue)	Sight (Eye)
Bone	Skin & Hair	Muscle	Vessel	Tendon
Fear	Grief	Sympathy	Joy	Anger
Cold	Dryness	Dampness	Heat	Wind
Storing	Reaping	Trans-formation	Growth	Germin-nation
Black	White	Yellow	Red	Green
Salty	Pungent	Sweet	Bitter	Sour
North	West	Centre	South	East

7.5 Zang Fu[15] (The Internal Organs)

In traditional Chinese medicine, Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera) are the essence of anatomy and physiology of the human body. They are divided into two groups: i.e., the Zang organs and the Fu organs. The Zang organs include the heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys, which are known as "solid" Yin organs. Their main physiological functions are to manufacture and store the essential substances such as Qi, blood and body fluid. The Fu organs include the small intestine, gall bladder, stomach, large intestine, urinary bladder and San Jiao[16], which are known as "hollow" Yang organs, and



An old anatomical drawing of Zang Fu.

15, 臟腑. 16, 三焦.

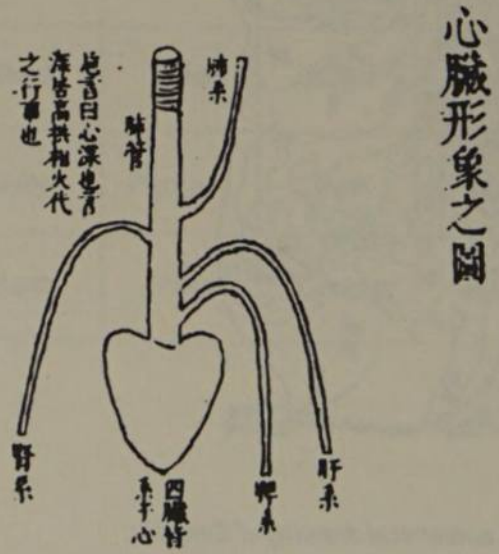
their main functions are to receive and digest food, and absorb nutrient substances, transport and excrete wastes. In addition, there are other extra Fu organs, including the brain and the uterus. It is known that each Zang organ is inter-linked with a Fu organ by a meridian. Furthermore, each Zang organ opens into an external sense organ, indicating a close relationship between the internal organs and the external sense organs.

Zang Organs

(1) Heart

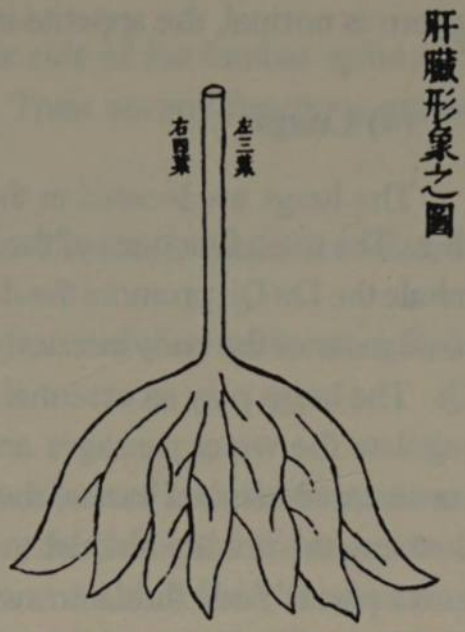
The heart is located in the thorax. It is linked with the small intestine. The main functions of the heart are to house the mind and to control blood and the blood vessels. It governs all mental activities, including spirit, consciousness, memory, thought, sleep and emotion, and promotes the circulation of blood through the vessels to nourish the whole body. Both the heart and the vessels are mutually affecting each other, as it is said, "The heart dominates the vessels and the vessels supply the mind." The heart opens into the tongue, converts the fluid into perspiration, supplies the pulse and nourishes the complexion.

In terms of the relation between the heart and the mind, it is generally held that the mind is a higher aspect of the heart.



An old anatomical drawing of the heart.

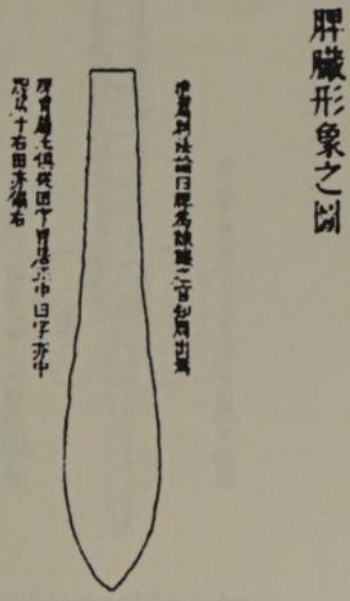
(2) Liver



An old anatomical drawing of the liver.

The liver is situated in the right hypochondriac region, linked with the gall bladder. The main functions of the liver are to store blood, to regulate the volume of circulating blood, to maintain patency for the flow of Qi, and to nourish the tendons with Qi and blood in order to make them strong and free in extension and flexion. Maintaining patency for the flow of Qi implies that the liver is related to emotional activities, especially to depression and anger. Prolonged mental depression or an unresolved anger may harm the liver so that it is unable to promote the unstrained and free flow of Qi. Thus, disorder of the liver reflects various emotional changes. The liver has the eyes for its opening, converts the fluid into tears, supplies the ligaments and nourishes the nails.

(3) Spleen



An old anatomical drawing of the spleen.

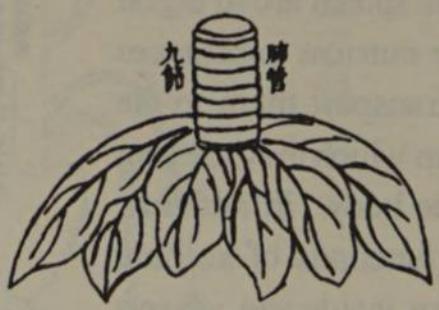
The spleen is located in the upper abdomen, linked with the stomach. The main functions of the spleen are to digest food, to absorb the nutrient substances and water, and to transport them to the heart and lungs, from which they are sent to nourish the whole body. In addition, the spleen has the functions of keeping the blood circulating inside the vessels and keeping the muscles well nourished. The spleen has the mouth as its opening, converts the fluid into saliva, supplies the

flesh, and nourishes the lips. When the physiological function of the spleen is normal, the appetite is good and lips are red and lustrous.

(4) Lungs

The lungs are located in the thorax, linked with the large intestine. The main functions of the lungs are related to respiration. They inhale the Da Qi, promote the distribution of Qi, blood and body fluid to all parts of the body interiorly and exteriorly, and exhale the waste Qi. The lungs play an essential role in Qi Gong exercises. They also regulate the water passages and promote water metabolism. They continuously send a part of the body fluid down to the kidneys and then into the urinary bladder to be excreted as urine, and meanwhile turn a part of body fluid into sweat to be excreted. They disperse the nutrients of food to the body surface to supply the skin and the fine hair. The lungs have the nose as their opening, and covert the fluid into nasal secretion.

肺臟形象之圖



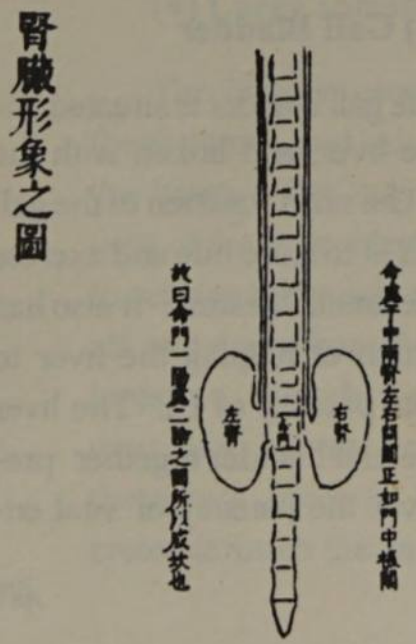
An old anatomical drawing of the lungs.

(5) Kidneys

The kidneys are situated at either side of the lumbar spine and are linked with the urinary bladder. Their several functions are as follows:

- reproduction, growth and development, which are related to storing Qi and Jing;
- producing marrow (the marrow includes the brain, spinal cord and bone marrow);
- manufacturing blood;
- controlling water metabolism, a part of body fluid sent down by the lungs, which is further divided in the kidneys into two parts, i.e., a clear fluid and a turbid fluid, the former one is retained, and the latter one flows into the urinary bladder to form urine;
- receiving Qi from the lungs and helping the lungs to distribute the Qi to the whole body;
- nourishing the ear with Qi from the kidneys to keep the auditory function normal.

The kidneys have the ears and genitourinary meatus for their openings, convert the fluids into spittle, supply the bone, and nourish the coarse hairs.

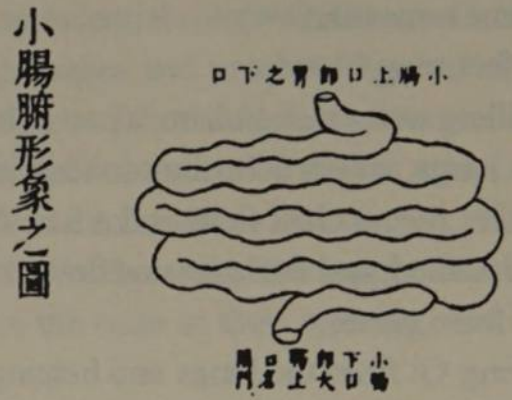


An old anatomical drawing of the kidneys.

Fu Organs

(1) Small Intestine

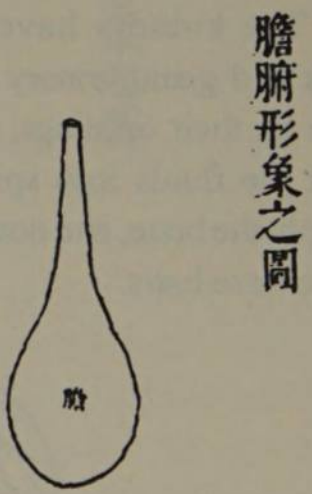
The small intestine is located in the abdomen, and linked with the heart. The functions of the small intestine are to receive and store the partially digested food from the stomach, to digest it further, to absorb the essential substances and a part of water in food, and to send the residues to the large intestine.



An old anatomical drawing of the small intestine.

(2) Gall Bladder

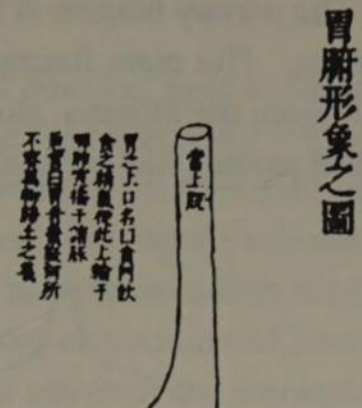
The gall bladder is situated under the liver, and linked with the liver. The main function of the gall bladder is to store bile and excrete it to the small intestine. It also has a function of helping the liver to promote patency of Qi. The liver and the gall bladder together preside over the patency of vital energy.

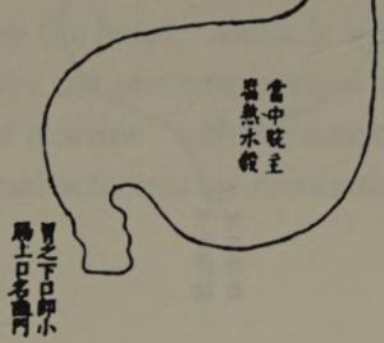


An old anatomical drawing of the gall bladder.

(3) Stomach

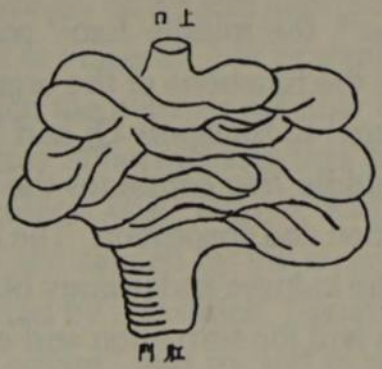
The stomach is situated in the upper abdomen, and linked with the spleen. The main function of the stomach is to receive and temporarily store the food coming from the mouth, digest it and send it down to the small intestine.





An old anatomical drawing of the stomach.

大腸腑形象之圖



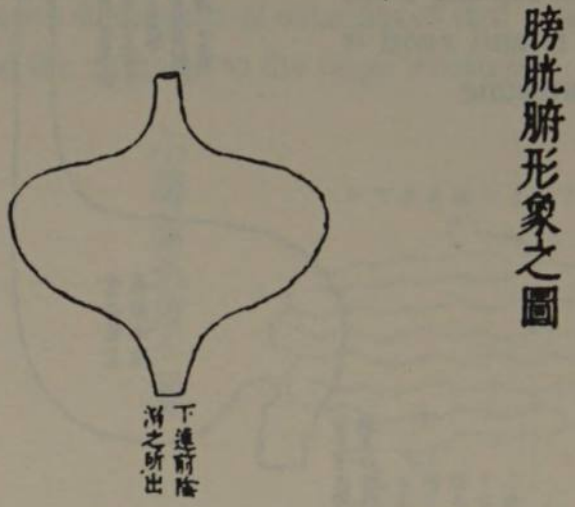
An old anatomical drawing of the large intestine.

(4) Large Intestine

The large intestine is in the abdomen, and linked with the lungs. The main functions of the large intestine are to receive the waste materials sent down from the small intestine, absorb a part of their fluid content and turn them into feces to be excreted through the anus.

(5) Urinary Bladder

The urinary bladder is in the lower abdomen, and linked with the kidneys. The main functions of the urinary bladder are to receive urine from the kidneys, store it temporarily and discharge it when a certain amount has accumulated.



An old anatomical drawing of the urinary bladder.

(6) San Jiao

The term of "San Jiao"[17] literally means "triple warmer". It is not a substantial organ, but a collective name or a symbol of three metabolic centers. They are the upper Jiao[18], the middle Jiao[19] and the lower Jiao[20]. The upper Jiao integrates the functions of the organs in the chest (chiefly the heart and the lungs) to transport Qi and blood which nourish the whole body. The middle Jiao combines the functions of the spleen and stomach in digestion and absorption. The lower Jiao is a generalization of functions of the kidneys and urinary bladder in the adjustment of water metabolism and the formation and excretion of urine. San Jiao is linked with the pericardium which is often referred to one of Zang organs, with the function of protecting the heart.

17,三焦. 18,上焦. 19,中焦. 20,下焦.

Extra Organs

(1) Brain

Originally, in ancient Chinese medical classics, such as Huang Di Nei Jing[21], the brain was described as the "sea of marrow". Later, it was recognized that the brain was an organ to receive and store information from sense organs like the ears, eyes, mouth and nose. Still later, it was also realized that thinking and memorization are the functions of the brain. However, in the theory of traditional Chinese medicine, it was described that the mental activities are dominated by the other organs, especially by the heart, which is known as the "house of the mind". The kidneys can produce marrow to form the brain, known as filling the "sea of marrow" with the assistance of Qi, and the liver is related to emotional activities by maintaining patency for the flow of Qi.

(2) Uterus

The function of the uterus is to preside over menstruation and to nourish the fetus.

One of the most important benefits in Qi Gong exercises is that it can strongly affect and improve the function of Zang Fu (the internal organs or viscera). For example, the liver is known to store blood, to maintain the patency for flow of Qi and to control emotional activities, thus abnormal function of the liver is often associated with a pale complexion, fatigue, bad temper, depression and gloominess which are caused by the stagnation of Qi in the liver. This can be corrected by relaxation, tranquilization and circulation of Qi in "the small circuit" and by self-massaging the Qi-cavties (acupoints) in the liver channel of the foot-Jueyin[22]. In addition, because of the exercises of abdominal respiration which can cause the movements of the diaphragm (see Chapter three), orthodromic or antidromic breathing helps promoting the function of the liver.

21.黃帝內經. 22.足厥陰肝經.

7.6 Jing Luo[23] (The Meridians)

Jing Luo, which literally means channels and collaterals, generally called meridians, is a conduit system where Qi travels, and also a functional system where Qi works. The whole system consists of 12 regular channels, 8 extra channels, 15 collaterals and many minor meridians. In total, there are 71 meridians and 561 acupoints or Qi-cavities, which are distributed all over the body (Figure 7.2; 7.3; 7.4). They internally communicate among viscera, and externally link all the tissues and organs of the superficial portion of the body. Functionally, they exert a coordinating and integrative action. The meridians are situated within the body, and not on the skin, although the acupoints or Qi-cavities can be located on the body surface, which is related to individual meridians accordingly.

In general, only the twelve regular channels and two extra channels (i.e., Du Mai[24] and Ren Mai[25]) are commonly used. These are known as the fourteen classical meridians of Chinese medicine, in which there are 361 acupoints or Qi-cavities.

Each of the twelve regular channels pertains interiorly to one of Zang Fu organs, and are grouped into twelve couples, which are called "exterior-interior channels". The complete name of each of the twelve regular channels should include three parts:

- Yin or Yang, indicating whether the channel takes its course along the medial or the lateral aspect of the limbs, or indicating what properties the channel obtains;
- hand or foot, indicating where the channel starts or terminates;
- the name of a Zang Fu organ, indicating which organ the channel pertains to.

(Yin Channels)

(1) The lung channel of the hand-Taiyin (Lu.)[26]

(2) The heart channel of the hand-Shaoyin (H.)[27]

23, 經絡. 24, 督脉. 25, 任脉. 26, 手太陰肺經. 27, 手少陰心經.

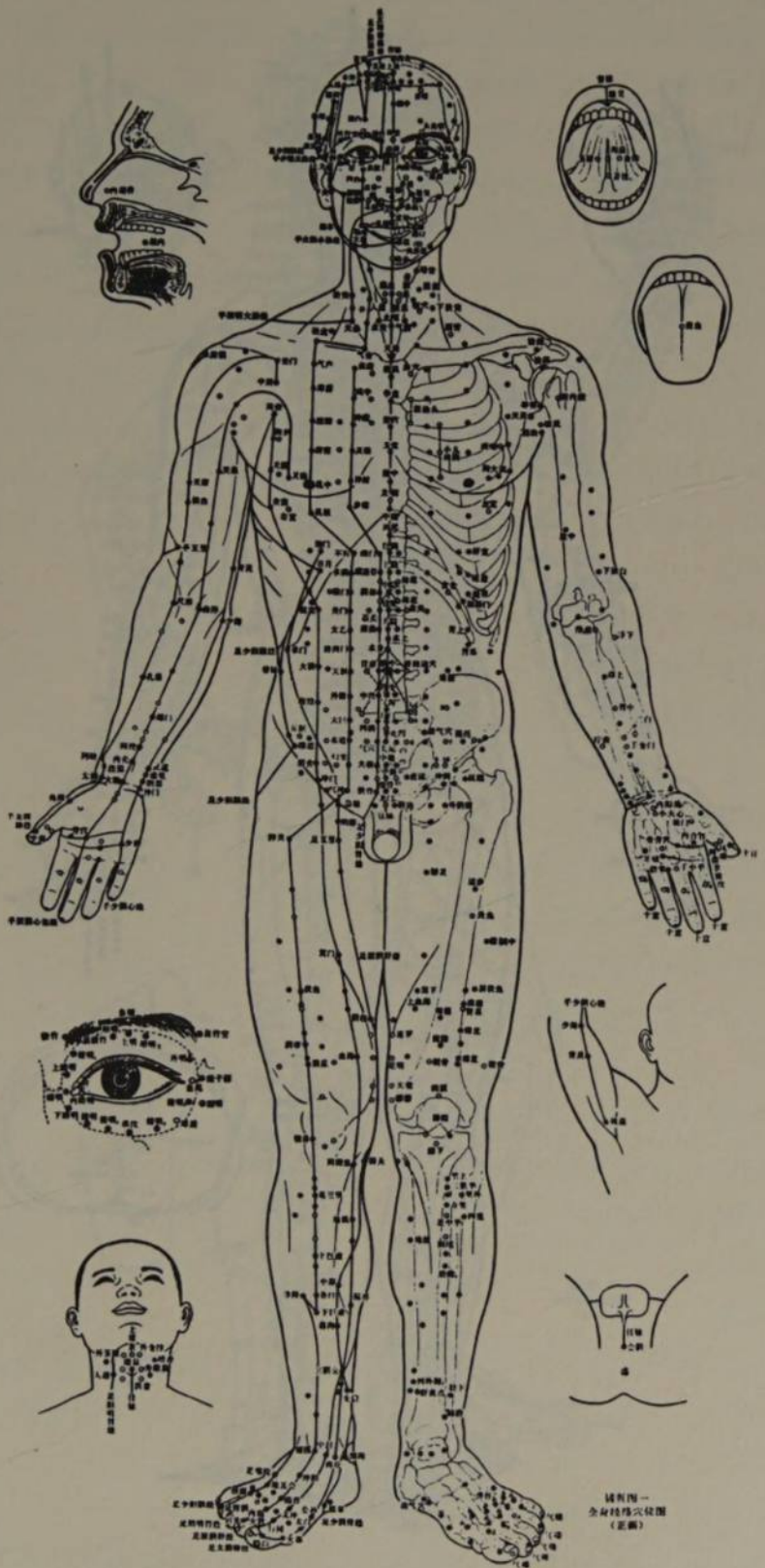


Figure 7.2 *The front view of meridian systems in the human body.*

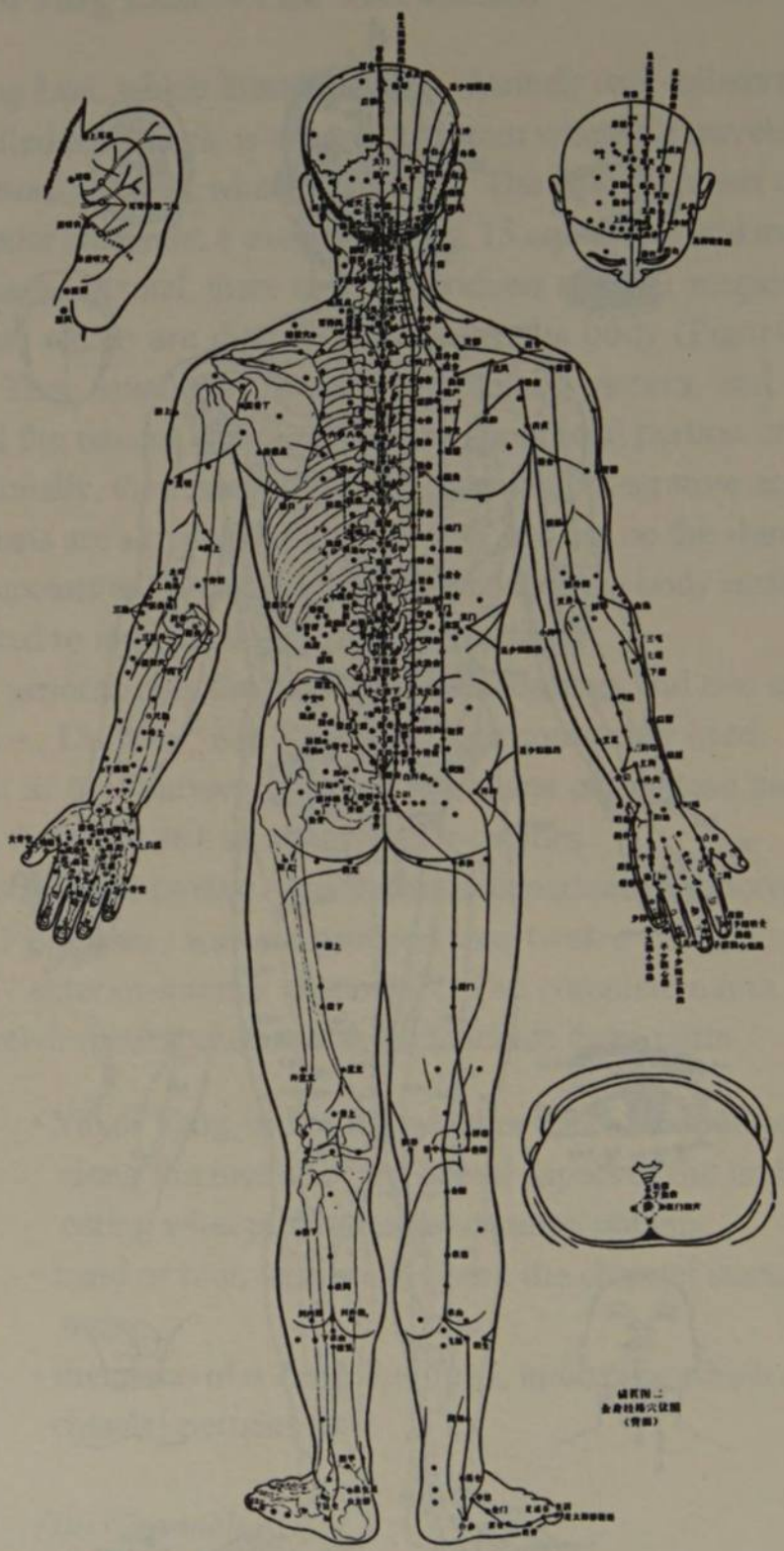


Figure 7.3 *The back view of meridian systems in the human body.*

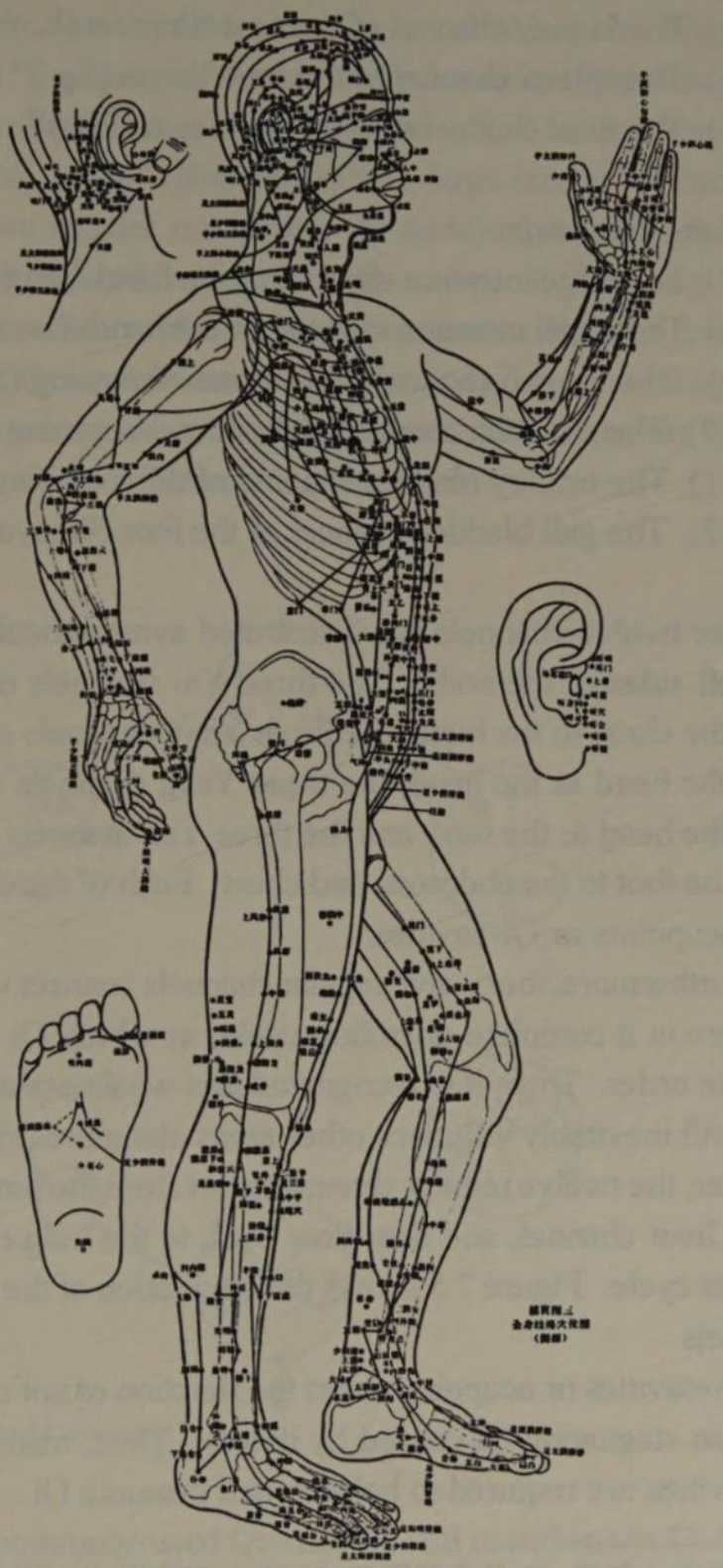


Figure 7.4 *The side view of meridian systems in the human body.*

(3) The pericardium channel of the hand-Jueyin (P.)[28]
(4) The kidney channel of the foot-Shaoyin (K.)[29]
(5) The spleen channel of the foot-Taiyin (Sp.)[30]
(6) The liver channel of the foot-Jueyin (Liv.)[31]

(Yang Channels)

(7) The large intestine channel of the hand-Yangming (L.I.)[32]
(8) The small intestine channel of the hand-Taiyang (S.I.)[33]
(9) The sanjiao channel of the hand-Shaoyang (S.J.)[34]
(10) The stomach channel of the foot-Yangming (St.)[35]
(11) The urinary bladder channel of the foot-Taiyang (U.B.)[36]
(12) The gall bladder channel of the foot-Shaoyang (G.B.)[37]

The twelve channels are distributed symmetrically on the right and left sides of the body. The three Yin channels of the hand run from the chest to the hand; the three Yang channels of the hand run from the hand to the head; the three Yang channels of the foot run from the head to the foot, and the three Yin channels of the foot run from the foot to the abdomen and chest. Each of the channels has its own acupoints or Qi-cavities.

Furthermore, the twelve regular channels connect with each other, so there is a complete unending cycle, in which Qi circulates in a definite order. Thus, it is recognized that weakness or illness in one area will inevitably influence other areas along the meridian system. In order, the twelve regular channels start from the lung channel, end at the liver channel, and then flow back to the lung channel to start another cycle. Figure 7.5 shows the circulation of the twelve regular channels.

Qi-cavities or acupoints exert the function of not only storing Qi, but also stagnating Qi caused by illness. Thus, manipulation of the Qi-cavities are required to balance and promote Qi.

28, 手厥陰心包經. 29, 足少陰腎經. 30, 足太陰脾經. 31, 足厥陰肝經.
32, 手陽明大腸經. 33, 手太陽小腸經. 34, 手少陽三焦經. 35, 足陽明胃經.
36, 足太陽膀胱經. 37, 足少陽膽經.

Qi Gong is developed on the basis of the Jing Luo (meridian) system. It trains one to master the Qi circulated in the Jing Luo system, such as "the microcosmic cycle" (also called "the small circuit") which involves the two extra meridians, Du Mai and Ren Mai; and "the heavenly cycle" (also called "the large circuit") which involves the twelve regular meridians. In addition, it works by manipulating the Qi located in a specific Qi-cavity. In Qi Gong exercises, several common methods, such as concentrating the mind or the will, guiding Qi to circulate, or An Mo Gong[38] (self-massage) on a Qi-cavity, are used to regulate, strengthen and balance the Qi, so that various beneficial effects can be achieved.

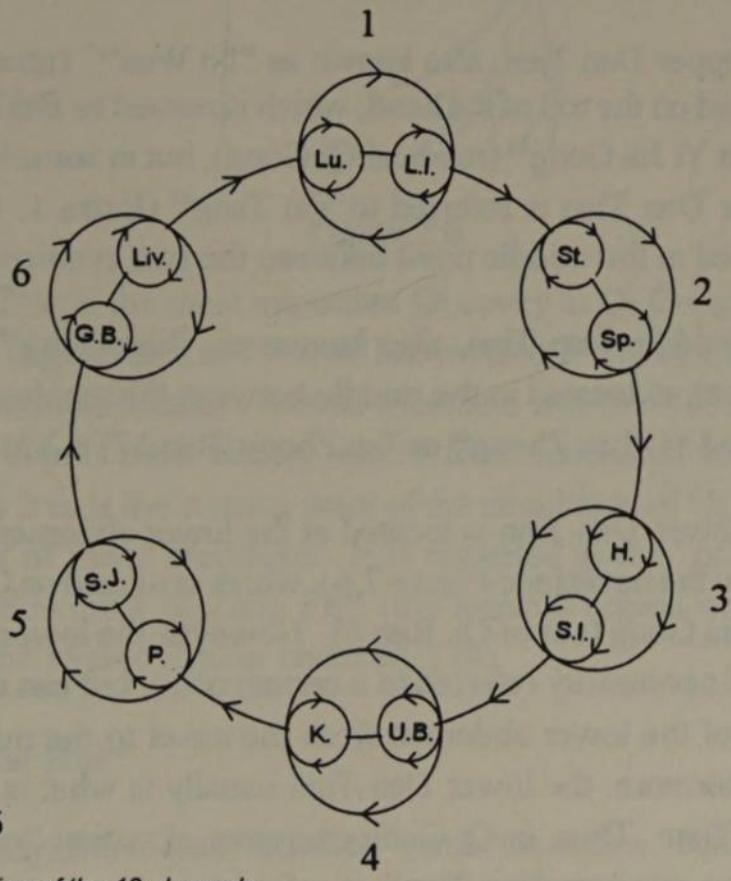


Figure 7.5

The connection of the 12 channels.

The most commonly-used Qi-cavities and meridians in Qi Gong exercises will be described here. The courses of all the meridians and the accurate location of acupoints or Qi-cavities along the merid-

38. 按摩功.

ians can be found in almost any book on traditional Chinese medicine, thus for more information on the meridian system, the reader is referred to these books.

The Most Commonly-Used Qi-Cavities

(1) Dan Tian[39]

The term of Dan Tian literally means the "Elixir Field". Because of different schools of Qi Gong, there are differences in the terminology and definition of Dan Tian. In Dao Jia Gong[40] (Taoist Qi Gong), Dan Tian as the "elixir field" is divided into three fields: the upper Dan Tian, the middle Dan Tian and the lower Dan Tian.

- The upper Dan Tian, also known as "Ni Wan[41]" (mud ball), is located on the top of the head, which is named as Bai Hui[42] (Du 20) in Yi Jia Gong[43] (medical Qi Gong), but in some books, the upper Dan Tian is referred to Yin Tang[44] (Extra 1, Glabella), located in the middle point between the two eyebrows.

- The middle Dan Tian, also known as "Jian Gong[45]" (scarlet palace), is located in the middle between the nipples, which is named as Shan Zhong[46] or Tan Zhong (Ren 17) in Yin Jia Gong.

- The lower Dan Tian is located at the lower abdomen 2 inches below the navel (see Figure 7.6), which is named as Qi Hai[47] in Yin Jia Gong (sea of Qi, Ren 6). However, the lower Dan Tian is not necessarily referred to a certain point, but can refer to an area of the lower abdomen from the navel to the pubic bone. Furthermore, the lower Dan Tian usually is what is meant as Dan Tian. Thus, in Qi Gong exercises, if stating "concentrating the mind on Dan Tian", it refers the concentration on the lower Dan Tian.

39, 丹田. 40, 道家功. 41, 泥丸. 42, 百會. 43, 醫家功. 44, 印堂. 45, 絳宮. 46, 膻中. 47, 氣海.

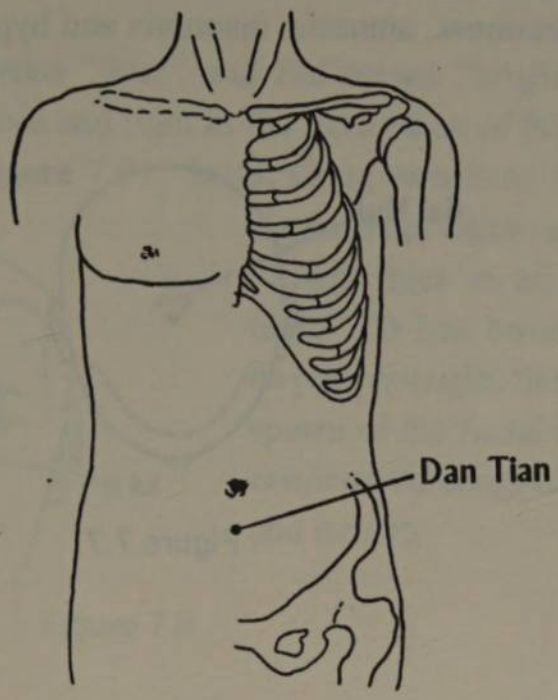


Figure 7.6

Dan Tian is the most important Qi cavity in Qi Gong exercises, where Qi is generated and stored, known as the "sea of Qi" or "elixir field". Both traditional Chinese medicine and the Taoists believe that Dan Tian is most closely related to all functional activities because this area is the starting point of the circulation of Qi, and meeting center of many meridians. It is regarded as the "progenitor of life", "endowment of Zang Fu[48] (the internal organs or viscera)", "root of the twelve regular channels", etc.

(2) Bai Hui[49]

Literally, Bai means "hundred", and Hui means "convergence". This is the upper Dan Tian, also known as "Ni Wan[50]". It is located at the vertex (Du 20), and it is a meeting place for the three foot-Yang meridians, the liver meridian and Du Mai. In addition, Taoists regard the point as the "Gate of Heaven". Once the Qi has reached there, some of it will become the "divine water", for example, the

48, 臟腑. 49, 百會. 50, 泥丸.

saliva. In Qi Gong exercises, it is known to have beneficial effects on headache, dizziness, amnesia, insomnia and hypotension. See Figure 7.7.

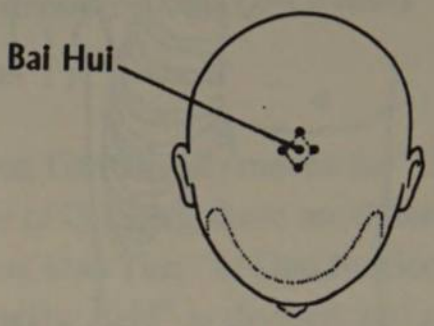


Figure 7.7

(3) Shan Zhong[51]

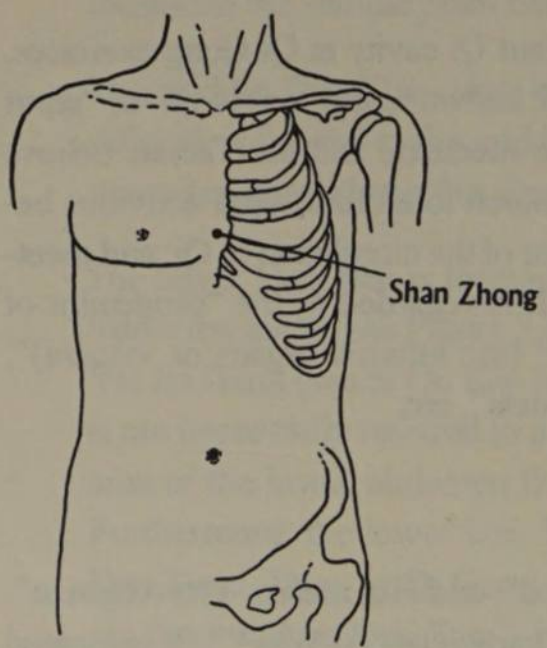


Figure 7.8

Literally, Shen means "chest", and Zhong means "middle". This is the middle Dan Tian, also known as the "scarlet palace". It is located on the anterior median line at the level of the 4th intercostal space, and at the midpoint between the two nipples (Ren 17) (Figure 7.8). In Qi Gong exercises, it is known to be closely related to the function of the heart, lungs and thymus gland, and to have beneficial effects on asthma, cough, chest distress, chest pain, palpitation, hiccup and immune activity.

51. 膻中.

(4) Si Bai[52]

Literally, Si means "four", and Bai means "brightness". It is located below the eye and right in the excavation of the infraorbital foramen (St 2) (Figure 7.9). In Qi Gong exercises, it is used to improve the vision, as it was said, "Sharp eyes in all four directions." It has beneficial effects on poor eyesight, facial paralysis, spasm of the facial muscles and conjunctival congestion with pain and itching.

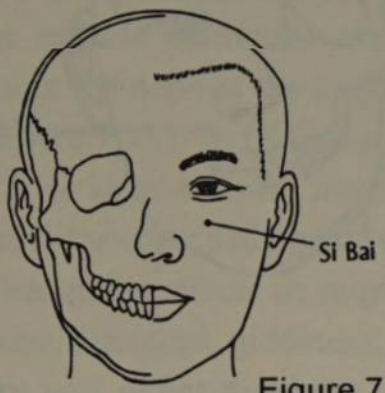


Figure 7.9

(5) Ying Xiang[53]

Literally Ying means "welcome", and Xiang means "fragrance". It is located at side of the nose and in the nasolabial groove (LI 20) (Figure 7.10). In Qi Gong exercises, it is used to improve the sense of smell, as it was said to "welcome fragrance". It has beneficial effects on stuffy nose, cold, rhinitis, deviation of the eye and mouth.

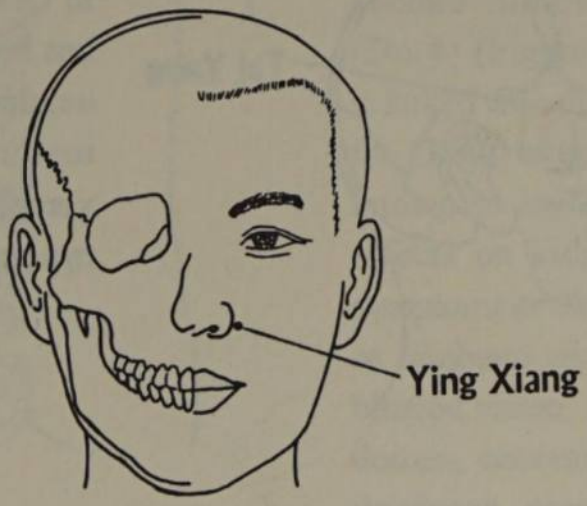


Figure 7.10

52,四白. 53,迎香.

(6) Ren Zhong[54]

Literally Ren means "man", and Zhong means "center". It is located between the nose and the upper lip, two-thirds above the lip margin (Du 26) (Figure 7.11). It is a vital point which is often used in emergency, life-danger situations, and it has beneficial effects on infantile convulsions, coma, seizure and dizziness.

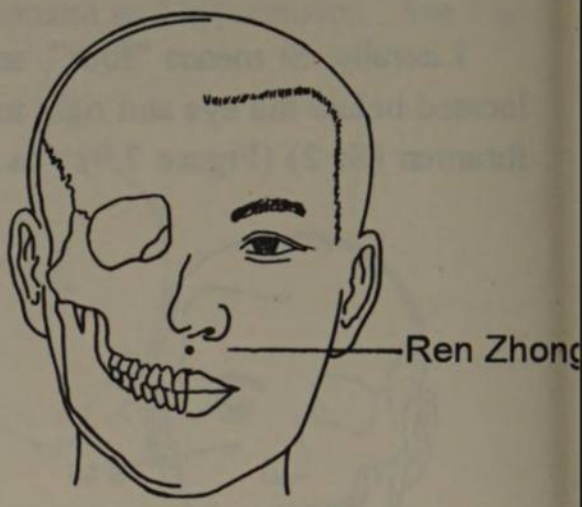


Figure 7.11

(7) Tai Yang[55]

Literally Tai Yang together means "temple". It is located between the outer corner of the eye and the eyebrow, in the depression of the zygomatic bone (Extra 2) (Figure 7.12). In Qi Gong exercises, it has beneficial effects on headache, cold, stress, insomnia, dizziness, xerophthalmia and other eye problems.

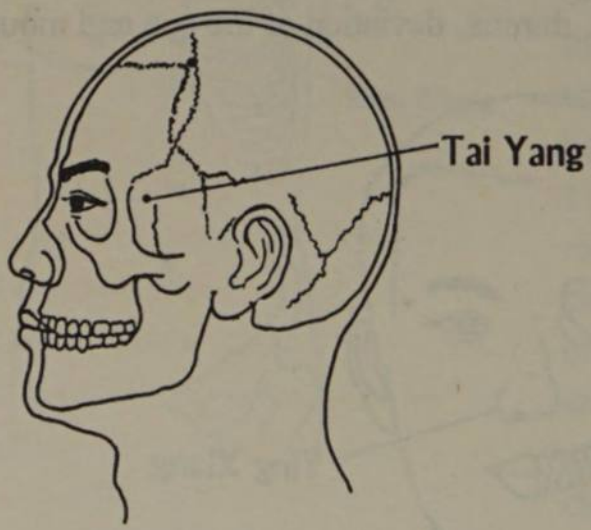


Figure 7.12

54,人中. 55,太陽.

(8) Feng Chi[56]

Literally Feng means "wind" and Chi means "pool". It is located at the triangular excavation between sternocleidomastoid muscle and trapezius muscle below the occipital bone over the nape of the neck (GB 20) (Figure 7.13). In Qi Gong exercises, it is known as an important point in eliminating pathogenic wind. It has beneficial effects on migraine, headache, dizziness, giddiness, neck rigidity and pain, apoplexy, cold, myopia and hypertension.

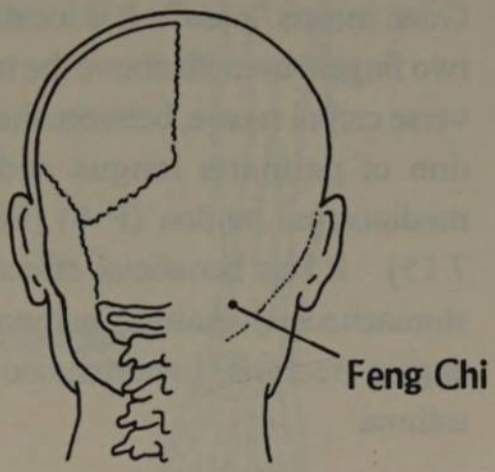


Figure 7.13

(9) Ming Men[57]

Literally Ming means "life", and Men means "gate". It is located below the spinous process of the second lumbar vertebra (Du 4) (Figure 7.14), and is linked with the kidney. In Qi Gong exercises, it is known to have beneficial effects on kidney-related symptoms or illnesses, such as lumbago and backache, blurred vision, swollen abdomen, enuresis, diarrhea, deafness, tinnitus, cold limbs, fatigue, lack of sex drive, fear and anxiety.

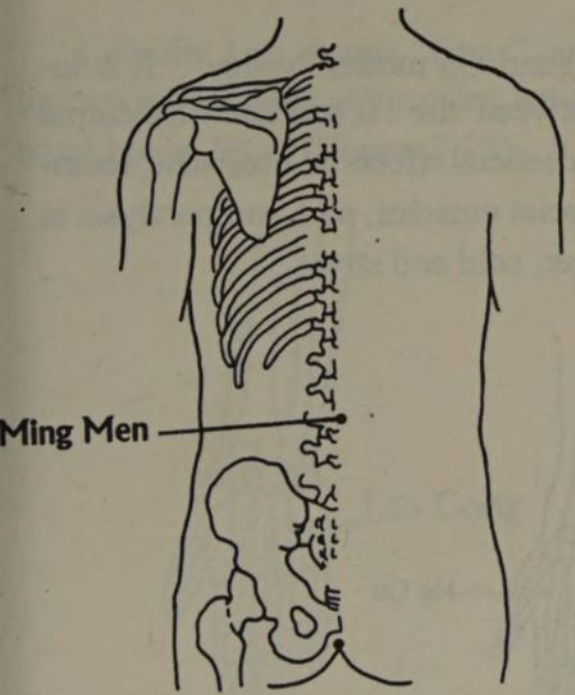


Figure 7.14

56. 風池. 57. 命門.

(10) Nei Guan[58]

Literally Nei means "inner", and Guan means "pass". It is located at two fingers breadth above the transverse carpal crease, between the tendon of palmaris longus and the mediocarpal tendon (P 6) (Figure 7.15). It has beneficial effects on stomachache, vomiting, palpitation, angina pectoris, hypertension and asthma.

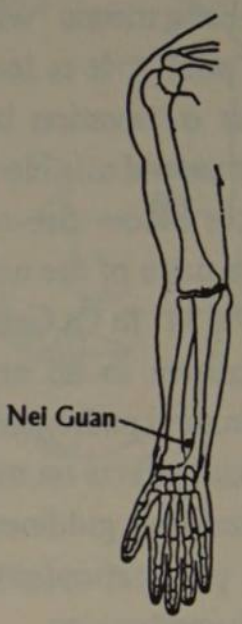


Figure 7.15

(11) He Gu[59]

Literally He means "junction", and Gu means "valley". It is located at the midpoint on the line between the 1st and 2nd metacarpal bones (LI 4) (Figure 7.16). It has beneficial effects on headache, toothache, sore throat, paralysis of the facial muscles, pain and paralysis in the upper limbs, spasm of the finger, cold and stress.

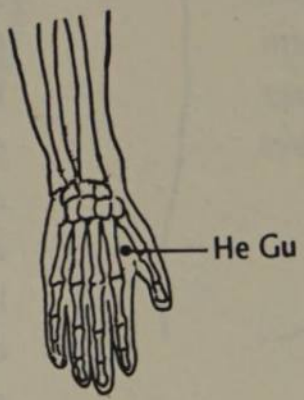


Figure 7.16

58. 內關. 59. 合谷.

(12) Lie Que[60]

Literally Lie means "arrangement", and Que means "depression". It is located at 1.5 finger breadth above the transverse crease of the wrist at the proximal end of the index finger (Lu 7) (Figure 7.17). It has beneficial effects on headache, stiff neck, cough, asthma, trigeminal neuralgia, facial hemiparalysis and hemiplegia.

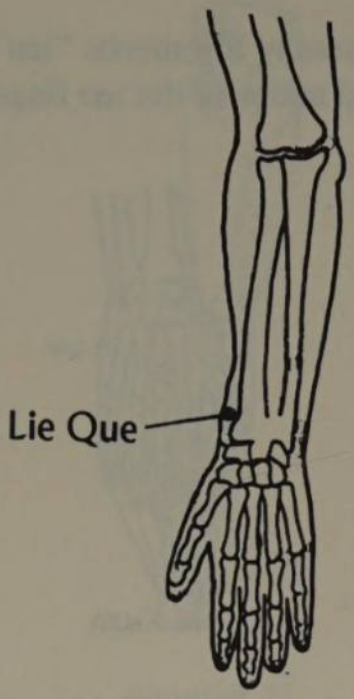


Figure 7.17

(13) Lao Gong[61]

Literally Lao means "labor", and Gong means "palace". It is located in the center of the palm, between the second and third metacarpal bones (P 8) (Figure 7.18). It is known as a strong Qi-cavity from which the Wai Qi (the external Qi) is released. In Qi Gong exercises, it is widely used in An Mo Gong (self-massage) and emitting Wai Qi for external Qi therapy. In addition, it has beneficial effects on palpitations, tremor, heatstroke and vomiting.

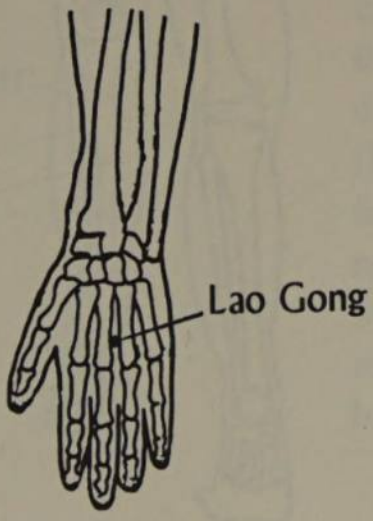


Figure 7.18

60, 列缺. 61, 劳宫.

(14) Shi Xuan[62]

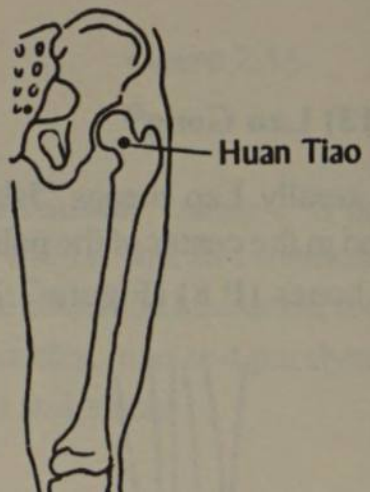
Literally Shi means "ten", Xuan means "fingertips". They are located at tips of the ten fingers (Extra 30) (Figure 7.19). They are also vital Qi-cavities and used for emitting Wai Qi (the external Qi). It has beneficial effects on fainting, coma, seizure and infantile convulsion.



Figure 7.19

(15) Huan Tiao[63]

Literally Huan means "circular", and Tiao means "jump". It is located at the junction of the external one-third and the internal two-thirds of a line drawn be-



(16) Wei Zhong[64]

Literally Wei means "crooked", and Zhong means "center". It is located at the exact midpoint of the popliteal transverse crease (UB 40) (Figure 7.21). It has beneficial effects on lumbago, backache, paralysis of the lower limbs, difficulties in movement of the knee joint and hemiplegia.

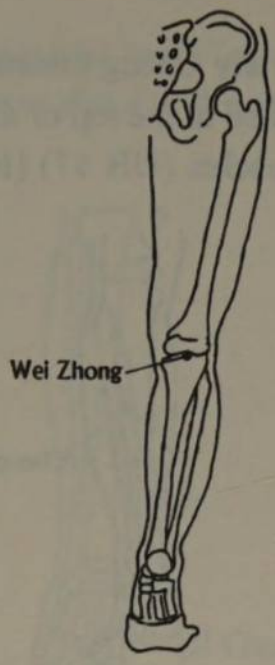


Figure 7.21



Figure 7.22

(17) Zu San Li[65]

Literally Zu means "foot", San means "three", and Li means a finger length in ancient time. It is located at three fingers breadth below the knee and one finger-width lateral the anterior crest of the tibia (St 36) (Figure 7.22). It has beneficial effects on stomach pain, pain and fullness in the abdomen, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, coldness and numbness of the lower limbs and hypertension.

64, 委中. 65, 足三里.

(18) Cheng Shan[66]

Literally Cheng means "sustain", and Shan means "mountain". It is located at the top of the depression between the two gastrocnemius muscles (UB 57) (Figure 7.23). It has beneficial effects on pain in the waist and legs, paralysis of the lower limbs and diarrhea.

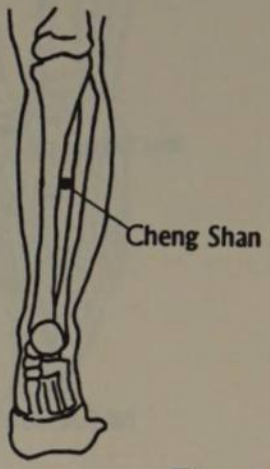


Figure 7.23

(19) Kun Lun[67]

Literally Kun means "big", and Lun means "high". It is located in the depression between the posterior border of the lateral malleolus and the medial aspect of the tendo calcaneus (UB 60) (Figure 7.24). It has beneficial effects on headache, stiff neck, lumbago, sprain of the ankle and paralysis of the lower limbs.

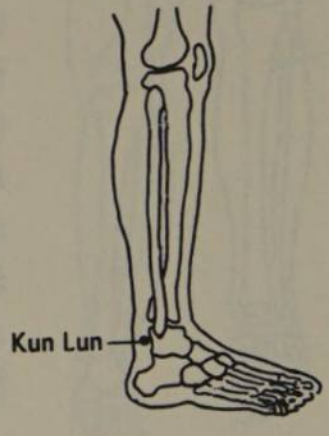


Figure 7.24

66. 承山. 67.崑崙.

(20) Tai Chong[68]

Literally Tai means "big", and Chong means "pass". It is located on the dorsum of the foot, in the depression distal to the articulation of the 1st and 2nd metatarsals (Liv 3) (Figure 7.25). It is an important Qi-cavity where the Qi is abundant, and it has beneficial effects on headache, dizziness, hypertension, infantile convulsions and eye problems.

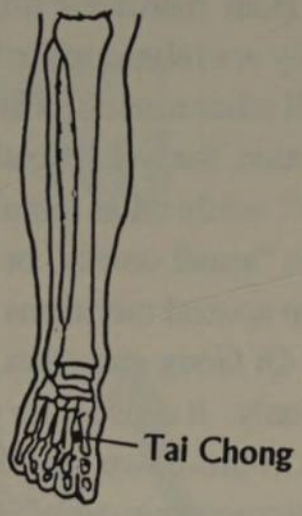


Figure 7.25

(21) Yong Quan[69]

Literally Yong means "gushing", and Quan means "spring". It is located at the center of the sole of the foot, in the depression formed when the toes and metatarsus are bent (K 1) (Figure 7.26). It is a vital point and a meeting place of Yin and Yang. In Qi Gong exercises, Yong Quan is the gate to communicating man's Qi with the earth, and the Qi is abundant here; from where the Qi flows upwards as a gushing spring. It has beneficial effects on coma, seizure, migraine headache, hypertension, vomiting, diarrhea and insomnia.

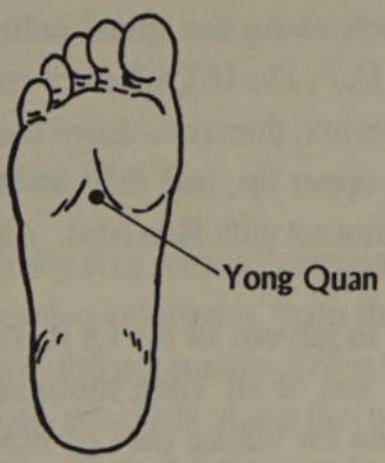


Figure 7.26

68, 太沖. 69, 湧泉.

The Most Commonly-Used Meridians

Among many meridians in the body, two meridians are of very special importance, they are the Du Mai and the Ren Mai, which are often called the "vessels", instead of "channels" like all other meridians. Both meridians originate in the lower abdomen, suggesting that they are related to the kidneys. Along their courses, they connect with all other meridians in the body. In terms of magnitude in the Qi circulation, the two special meridians are like the "big rivers" or "tree trunks", while other meridians, like the twelve regular channels, are like the "small creeks" or "tree branches". Thus, Qi is abundant in the two special meridians.

In Qi Gong exercises, the two special meridians are used most commonly. It is usual for practitioners to sense, regulate and control the Qi in these two meridians first, known as "the small circuit" or "the microcosmic cycle", then turn to other meridians, known as "the large circuit" or "the heavenly cycle". See Chapter five.

(1) Du Mai[70]

Literally Du means "governing", and Mai means "vessel". This meridian originates from the inside of the lower abdomen and emerges at the perineum. From there, it turns posteriorly to the lower end of the spinal column. It travels upwards along the spinal column to a point at the nape of the neck (Feng Fu[71], Du 16), where it enters the brain. It continues to ascend to the vertex, then runs down the middle of the forehead and the nose to the upper lip, and ends in the gums above the canines, where it makes contact with Ren Mai. Along this meridian, there are 28 Qi-cavities.

The function of this meridian is to govern all the Qi in Yang meridians in the body, known as the "sea of all Yang meridians". In addition, this meridian is responsible for taking care of many sicknesses, such as irritability, stiffness of the spine, neck pains, eye problems, urine retention, haemorrhoids, sterility, nervous system problems, etc.

70, 督脉. 71, 風府.



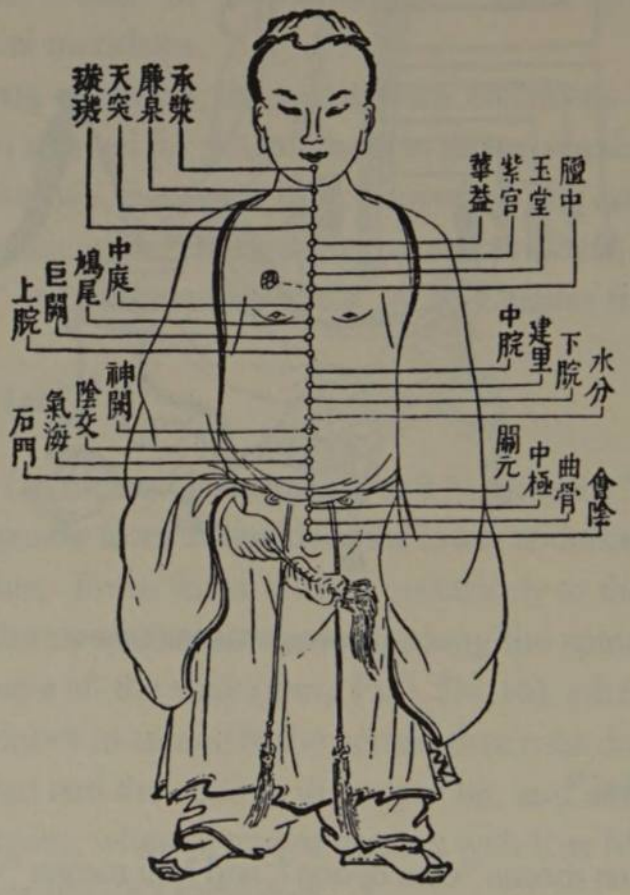
An old drawing of Du Mai system.

(2) Ren Mai[72]

Literally Ren means "conception", and Mai means "vessel". This meridian also originates from the inside of the lower abdomen and emerges at the perineum. From there, it turns anteriorly to the pubis, and travels upwards along the midline of the abdomen and chest to the throat. Then it continues to go upwards to the hollow between the lower lip and the chin, and ends with a circle round the mouth. Along this meridian, there are 24 Qi-cavities.

72. 任脉.

The function of this meridian is to direct all the Yin meridians in the body, known as the "sea of all Yin meridians". In addition, this meridian is responsible for taking care of many sicknesses, such as colds, hayfever, skin itching, asthma, bronchitis, coughs, breathing problems, dyspepsia, epilepsy, hernia, mouth problems, digestive problems, urogenital problems, female insufficiency problems, etc. It also controls pregnancy and menstruation.



An old drawing of Ren Mai system.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON QI GONG



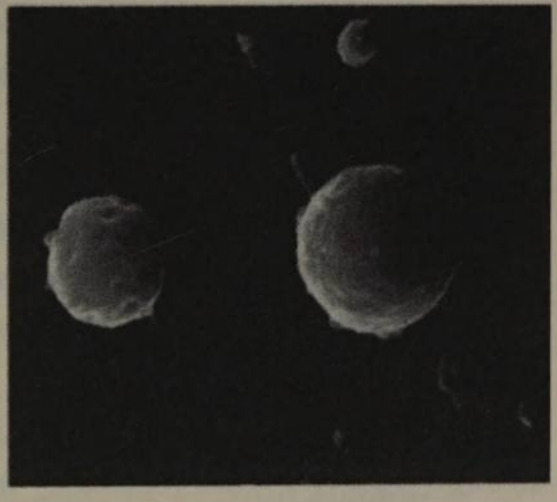
Producing without possessing,
doing without presuming,
growing without domineering,
this is called mysterious power.

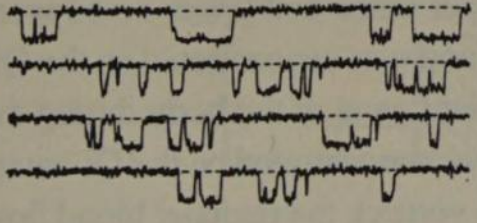
— Lao Zi (Lao Tzu) (6th century B.C.)

8.3 Endocrine System

In the last twenty years, over a hundred varieties of naturally occurring biologically active substances (or molecules) have been shown to exist in the body. Most of them are known as endogenous biological peptides, forming the endocrine system or the peptide-messenger system to control the body and mind. They are transmitted through all the body fluids and/or distributed in all the tissues. Each of the peptides exerts a particular physiological function, for example: adrenocorticotrophin for stress, endorphin for anesthesia, substance P for pain, insulin for carbohydrate metabolism, vasopressin for water balance, oxytocin for lactation, cholecystokinin for motility of the gastrointestinal tract, interferon for innate immunity, interleukin for defense against cancers, etc. They are the chemical basis of life.

A scanning electron micrograph of nerve terminals.





Single ion channel current from the nerve terminals.

It is our prediction that Qi Gong works primarily through the endocrine system to exert physiological and therapeutic regulation in the body and mind. Future scientific research should focus more on

this system. Some studies have found that Qi Gong exercises decrease concentrations of adrenocorticotrophin and glucocorticoids, which are released in response to stress and other emotional disorders, and which modulate the immune system.

8.4 Circulatory System

It has been reported that Qi Gong can improve the cerebral circulation. Experiments were carried out on 72 Qi Gong practitioners (56 males, 16 females, with an average age of 49.6 years) and 27 control subjects (12 males, 15 females, with an average age of 46.9 years). The cerebral blood flow (CBF) was measured from the frontal and occipital areas of both sides of brain with rheoencephalography before and after three months' training. Three results were found:

- The CBFs in all the four areas increased in the practitioners whose CBFs were much lower than the normal value before the training.
- The CBFs decreased in those whose CBFs were much higher than the normal value before the training.
- The CBFs remained unchanged in those whose CBFs were within the normal range before the training.

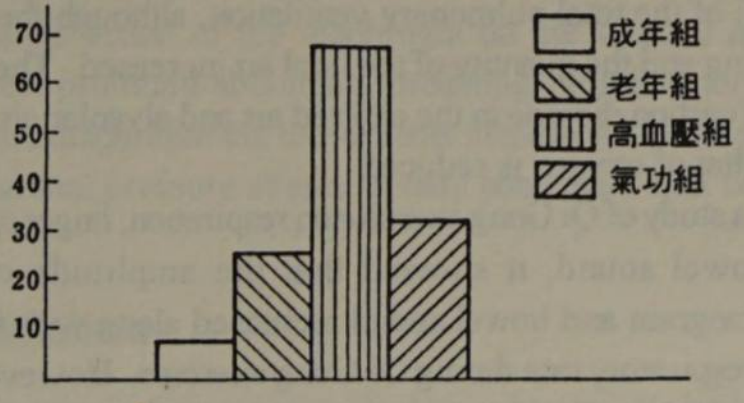
Therefore, it is suggested that Qi Gong training exerts its effects through a bidirectional regulatory action on the cerebral blood flow in order to maintain it at its normal level and rate.

The blood flow of the brain, upper limbs and lower limbs were recorded simultaneously when the mind was concentrated on the Qi-cavities (acupoints) located on different parts of the body during the Qi Gong training. When the mind was concentrated on the Qi-cavity Bai Hui[2] (Du 20, at the center of the vertex), the regional blood flow (RBF) increased in the brain and decreased in the limbs. When the mind was concentrated on left Lao Gong[3] (P 8, in the center of the palm), the RBF increased in the upper limbs and decreased in the

2,百會. 3,勞宮.

brain and lower limbs. When the mind was concentrated on left Yong Quan[4] (K 1, in the center of the sole), the RBF increased in the lower limbs and decreased in the brain and the upper limbs. These results indicate that there is a redistribution of the blood flow in different parts of the body during Qi Gong exercise, depending on the individual training method. It is concluded that the blood flow increased in the part which the mind concentrated on, and decreased in the other parts. If these results can be further confirmed, it may explain why people with hypertension are advised not to concentrate the mind on the Qi-cavities located on the head during Qi Gong training, which is commonly used as a healing practice.

In another study the effects of Qi Gong exercise on heart function, electrocardiogram (ECG), phonocardiogram (PCG) and carotid artery pulse were recorded in 37 middle-aged volunteers, 25 males and 12 females, before and one year after Qi Gong training. It was found that the left ventricular contraction time of the heart became longer, while the ejection period, systolic pressure and diastolic pressure of the heart decreased significantly. A study on the load test of the heart function showed that the Qi Gong exercises could improve the heart function remarkably.



(圖二)微循環分組對照觀察

Qi Gong experiment with the microcirculation.

4.湧泉.

Disorders in microcirculation may occur when people living on plains at low altitudes enter the highlands hastily, due to acute deficiency of oxygen as known as "acute altitude stress". Qi Gong exercises were reported to be helpful in preventing or alleviating the acute altitude stress. Another study showed that the incidence of microcirculation disorders was much lower in airforce pilots who had practised Qi Gong for eight weeks than in those who had been trained only with common physical exercises.

Many clinical research studies showed that the blood pressure of patients suffering hypertension (high blood pressure) was reduced after having engaged in Qi Gong training, whereas the blood pressure was raised to a normal level in those patients suffering hypotension (low blood pressure). This was thought to be due to the bidirectional regulatory effect of Qi Gong to balance the activity of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.

8.5 Respiratory System

The changes in respiration during Qi Gong practice are variable, depending on the types of Qi Gong exercises adopted by individuals.

Among the skilled Qi Gong practitioners, the rate of breathing may decrease greatly during Qi Gong practice, which causes a reduction of the total pulmonary ventilation, although the depth of the breathing and the quantity of the tidal air increased. The partial pressure of carbon dioxide in the expired air and alveolar air is increased, while that of oxygen is reduced.

In a study of Qi Gong exercise on respiration, finger sphygmogram and bowel sound, it showed that the amplitude of the finger sphygmogram and bowel sound increased along with the reduction of the respiratory rate during Qi Gong exercise. However, these only occurred when exhaling was longer than inhaling. If inhaling was longer than exhaling, the amplitude of finger sphygmogram and bowel sound was reduced. Furthermore, when the breath was held for 20 seconds at the end of inhaling, the bowel sound increased considerably; whereas when the breath was held for 20 seconds at the end of

the exhaling, the bowel sound was reduced significantly. Therefore, different breathing patterns might exert different effects.

8.6 Digestive System

The peristaltic movements and secretions of the stomach and intestines are enhanced in most cases during Qi Gong practice. A study was carried out on 10 subjects performing Qi Gong exercise with abdominal breathing and the mind concentrated on Dan Tian. It was found that the speed of gastric peristaltic waves increased on an average of 25.4% in 7 subjects, ranging between 8.4% and 44.5%, and decreased on an average of 8.7% in 3 subjects, ranging between 7.9% and 9.5% during the Qi Gong practice. An increase in the amplitude of the peristaltic waves and a decrease in emptying time of the stomach were also reported.

Studies on saliva secretion among the patients with hypertension indicated that the secretion of the parotid gland decreased on an average of 36.8% during Qi Gong training, however, after cessation of the practice session it increased significantly with an average of 47.9%. These changes were supposed to be caused by a rise in the excitability of the parasympathetic nervous system in company with a fall in the excitability of the sympathetic nervous system, together with the massage action of the diaphragm on the visceral organs during deep and profound abdominal breathing. Furthermore, the amplitude of the diaphragmatic movements increased 3-4 times and the intra-abdominal pressure altered greatly compared with control studies.

8.7 Metabolism

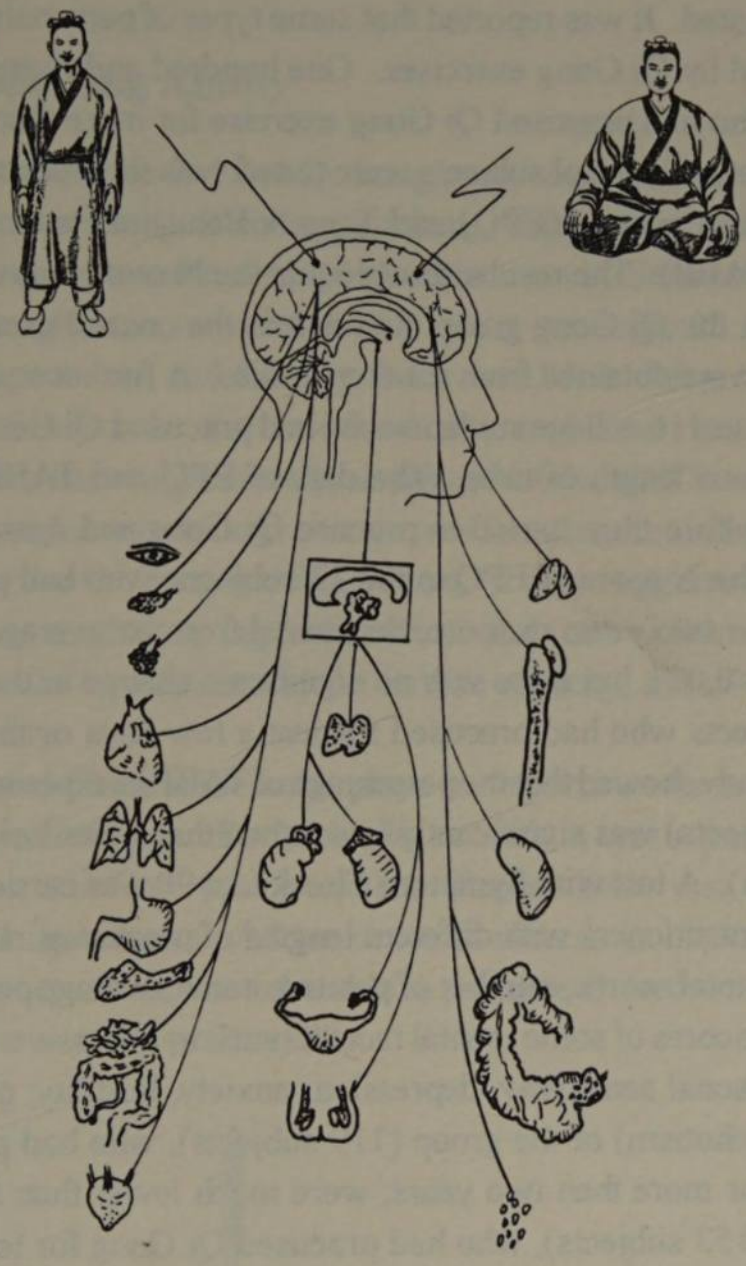
Changes in metabolism were studied on subjects who had practised Qi Gong for 2-3 years. The consumption of oxygen, production of carbon dioxide and concentration of lactate in the blood were measured every 10 minutes before, during and after Qi Gong training. It was found that the rates of average oxygen consumption and carbon dioxide output decreased from 251 to 211 cm^3 /min and from

219 to 187 cm^3/min, respectively, after entering the "State of Void". All the parameters were restored to their previous levels at the close of training. The concentration of blood lactate also decreased from an average of 10.2 to 7.1 mg/100 cm^3, and was similarly restored to its previous level. Another study showed a decrease of concentration of lactate in the blood during Qi Gong training, from an average of 13.0 to 9.8 mg/100cm^3 about 20-30 minutes after entering the "State of Void". These results indicated that the metabolism of the body decreased appreciably during Qi Gong practice. Several studies on the basal metabolic rate showed that there was a reduction of 19-37% during Qi Gong training.

8.8 Thermoregulation

During Qi Gong exercise, practitioners often feel a sensation of warmth or cold in some part of the body or in the limbs. In order to study whether there is a real change in local temperature or just a subjective illusion, experiments were carried out on hospital patients admitted with asthma. Of the 47 patients examined, 23 practising Qi Gong and 24 being control subjects, it was found that when the patients practised Qi Gong with the mind concentrated on the Qi-cavity Shen Que[5] (Ren 8, located in the center of the umbilicus), the local temperature rose by an average of 2.4 °C, and maintained the temperature elevated for 4-5 hours before returning to its original level. The greatest change was reported to be as high as 4 °C. The studies on the Qi-cavities Lao Gong (P. 8, located in the center of the palm) and He Gu[6] (LI 4, located on the dorsum of the hand between the 1st and 2nd metacapal bones) also indicated a local rise in temperature when the practitioner concentrated the mind on these areas during Qi Gong exercises. However, some reports indicated that local temperature might either rise or fall, depending on the types of Qi Gong exercises and on the individual, and that the changes in local temperature might not be in accordance with the subjective feelings. Therefore, further investigations are needed.

5.神闕. 6.合谷.



Qi Gong effects on bodily physiology – multiple systems and multiple organs.

8.9 Mental Activity

Recently, influences of Qi Gong training on mental activities were investigated. It was reported that some types of personality could be modified by Qi Gong exercises. One hundred and twenty-two subjects, who had practised Qi Gong exercise for more than two years, and ninety as control subjects were tested with the Eyesenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) and Type A Behavior Pattern Questionnaire (TABP). The results showed that the N score was significantly lower in the Qi Gong group than that in the control group. Similar results were obtained from another studies. A further study was carried out in 116 college students who had practised Qi Gong exercises for various length of time. The data of EPQ and TABP were collected before they started to practise Qi Gong and again two years later. The N score of EPQ in the 33 subjects, who had practised Qi Gong for two years or more, decreased from an average of 13.4 to 11.1 ($p<0.02$), but there was no significant change in the remaining 83 subjects who had practised for just a few days or months. Another study showed that the percentage of TABP in experimental group (89 subjects) was significantly lower than that in control group (114 subjects). A test with Symptom Check List 90 was carried out on Qi Gong practitioners with different lengths of practising. It was found that the total scores, number of positive items, average positive items and the scores of some mental factors (such as obsessive-compulsive interpersonal sensitivity, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobic anxiety, psychotism) of the group (119 subjects), who had practised Qi Gong for more than two years, were much lower than those of the group (153 subjects), who had practised Qi Gong for less than two years. It is known that there is a close relationship between personality and certain diseases. For example, the incidence of coronary heart disease is associated with TABP, some psychosomatic diseases are associated with neuroticism. The results mentioned above suggested that Qi Gong exercise might exert a positive influence on the regulation of unhealthy tendencies in personality, and thus might improve and strengthen mental health as an "emotional stabilizer".

There were reports that ability in mental arithmetic, memory and the flexibility and accuracy of thinking were enhanced after Qi Gong training.

8.10 Sporting Ability

Many studies showed that Qi Gong practice can influence sporting ability. In a group of college students, before they took the Qi Gong training course, the average blood lactic acid clean rates measured 20 and 40 minutes after an 800 meter run were 20.1 % and 57.1 %, respectively, and the step index was 45.2. After Qi Gong training for five months, the two blood lactic acid clean rates and the step index increased significantly, showing 36.6 %, 80.3 % and 64.2, respectively, while no obvious change was found in the students who did not take the Qi Gong training course. It was suggested that Qi Gong training might help cope with stress and recover from fatigue, and improve the circulation and the cardiac capacity, and so enhance sporting ability.

Traditional Chinese medicine plays an important role in training of professional athletes. For example, recently it was reported that Dong Chong Xia Cao[7] (cordyceps), a Chinese herb, was used by Chinese women runners who broke world records in 10,000-meter race. Cordyceps is shown to be able to promote Qi in the mind and body, known as a "Qi promoter".



冬虫夏草

The Chinese herb, Dong Chong Xia Cao.

7.冬蟲夏草.

CHAPTER NINE

THE FUTURE FOR QI GONG



The blazing sun is disappearing behind the mountains,
and the Yellow River meanders its way towards the ocean;
if you want to have a glimpse of the grand landscape,
just climb up one more flight in the tower.

— Wang Zhihuan (Tang Dynasty)

First of all, is there a place for Qi Gong in modern health care?

Traditional Chinese medicine is rooted deeply in Chinese life as an essential part of her cultural fibre, a legacy passed down from generation to generation. In the 1950s Chairman Mao called for seeking a pathway of combined traditional Chinese medicine and Western Medicine. In China the two systems became not only integrated, but also embraced each other in many aspects. In every Western-style hospital there are additional facilities of traditional Chinese medicine, such as Qi Gong, acupuncture, moxibustion, massage, chiropractic, herbal medicine, etc. Side by side with Western system, they provide effective therapeutic measures, known as "Conservative Treatments". Many doctors who graduate from Western medical schools undertake basic or advanced training in traditional techniques. Doctors from both disciplines confer, exchange views and often treat patients under both systems at once. On the other hand, patients themselves may participate directly in healing process, by choosing treatment, preferring one or the other regimen, or a combination of both. Moreover, patients often are treated not merely as a malfunctioning physical mechanism, but rather as a delicate equilibrium of spirit, mind and body.

It is fair to say that China has a very good health care system

which is accessible to everyone, despite daunting administrative and economic problems in serving a population exceeding one billion people. We consider ourselves fortunate in having experienced the two cultures, East and West. We all agree that Western medicine has made great advances against disease, particularly in the diagnosis and treatment of acute diseases and infectious diseases, but it has its limitations and disadvantages too. Today in the West more and more people are becoming convinced that chemical drugs and modern surgical intervention (comparable to automobile or computer repair centers) do not provide all the answers or the best answers to their health problems and their needs. Many turn to alternative care systems, including traditional Chinese medicine. A national survey in 1993[1] showed that 34 percent of Americans use unconventional medical treatments.

In 1992, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), USA, set up an organization to study the unconventional medical practices including traditional Chinese medicine and Qi Gong. Several American universities began teaching courses on alternative medicine, including Harvard Medical School; University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine; Georgetown University School of Medicine; University of Virginia School of Medicine; etc.[2]



Qi Gong training in the West.

1, Eisenberg, D.M. et al. Unconventional medicine in the United States. The New England Journal of Medicine, 328:246-252,1993. 2, Harrison, L. Unconventional Wisdom. The New Physician, 42:14-20,1993.

Traditional Chinese medicine has been found to relieve many illnesses, and is particularly effective in chronic illnesses and in some conditions resistant to treatment by Western medicine. Furthermore, for problems related to the mind and the emotions, such as the stress of daily life, and to a self-motivated health care and prevention of disease, traditional Chinese medicine is a solution. However, we have to admit that traditional Chinese medicine also has its limitations and disadvantages. But one thing we know for sure is that a combined approach of both, the East and the West, will be far more effective than will either one alone. We believe that traditional Chinese medicine works effectively in all cultures, and not only for the Chinese. Acceptance of both systems will enable doctors to have the optimal regime for the fight against disease. Patients deserve the optimal care provided by all good systems available. This approach should be encouraged and respected.

In a broad sense, widespread understanding of Chinese Qi Gong will in future be built on two foundations, one is the moral standard and the other is the scientific rigor.

Such is the pace of life and so immense are man's achievements in the short span of the past 50-100 years that we tend to neglect or even abandon our heritage and foundations stretching back 3,000-5,000 years. We acknowledge "Progress" "Economic Growth" or "Civilization", the marvels of the industrialized world. Indeed there seems to be no limit to our ingenuity. But these advances have come at tremendous cost to the human spirit, to our environment and thus to the ease with which we reside together on our planet – the earth. Surrounded as we are by a plethora of material goods and convenience, often we find ourselves prey to discontent, a curious emptiness and anxiety, and we ask, "Where is joy? How will the human soul survive the mounting pressures and cruel inequalities of the modern world?"

From our perspective, as far as our destination concerned, we are heading to an unknown world, apparently a self-destructive one, because we have already damaged today's world, with air pollution,

water contamination, deforestation, city-decay, crime, disease, etc., and at personal level, with emotional stress, depression, anxiety, greed, selfishness, prejudice, emptiness, etc. We hope, before moving too far, that somehow we could adjust our course and find our proper place in the universe in order to avoid paying too high a price and to save both ourselves and nature.

One of many effective measures to address these problems is to continue searching our consciousness and reevaluating our past. Qi Gong is a part of the quest. For centuries, ancient Chinese doctrine has taught us that man is part of the universe, influenced by every aspect of nature, and most importantly that the balance between man and nature is crucial for both to prosper. For centuries, Chinese Qi Gong has been there serving that purpose – the balance of man and nature, and balance within oneself. Thus, Qi Gong is not only for well-being in mind and body, but also for consciousness within and without. As a healing art of preserving the mind and body, its effectiveness has been proved over the millennia, it has stood the test of time.

So here the question is raised, "How does Qi Gong work in modern scientific terms?"

In traditional Chinese medicine, man as an individual is regarded as a microcosm of the universe, equipped with all the functions and supplies necessary to sustain him; and furthermore man possesses the self-repair tools to accommodate all his needs. In short, man is capable of healing within himself, as the Chinese say, "Man's fate is in his own hands." This ancient wisdom is now gradually being substantiated by today's scientific methods, as for example, in the more than one hundred peptide substances (molecules) that have been identified in the body, each one serving a special function in health and the healing process. The existence of these abundant endogenous natural substances strongly suggests that a perfect and comprehensive "pharmaceutical factory" or "drugstore" resides in one's own body. Thus, there is no doubt that the body has an in-built self-health and self-healing capacity.

Here another question is raised, "What triggers the release of these substances?" Our hypothesis is that Qi Gong triggers the release of the endogenous substances (molecules) and that Qi supplies the energy to perform the process. Thus, self-health and self-healing process can be activated, good health is preserved and powerful healing is carried out. This is like "the doctor within" working in conjunction with "the drugstore within".

Here we confront two most important questions, "Can this hypothesis be proved? What is the mechanism of action of Qi Gong?"

To answer these questions, the two medical establishments, traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine, must join forces because either one alone cannot provide the answers. We hope that this book will bring the two sides a step closer together, for their mutual understanding, and will arouse more attention from the West. The following are some potential experiments from our long list of proposals for scientific research on Qi Gong:

- To measure the concentrations in the blood and the brain of endogenous substances, such as the painkilling substances, endorphin, enkephalins and dynorphin, before, during and after Qi Gong exercises in healthy volunteers.
- To measure the activities of a particular organ before, during and after Qi Gong exercises in healthy volunteers, in relation to such phenomena as the brain's electroencephalogram (EEG), sensory evoked potentials (SEPs), cellular unit activity, or cellular membrane ion channel activity.
- To measure the effects on the blood pressure and heart rate in hypertensive patient before, during and after Qi Gong exercises.
- To measure which types of Qi Gong exercises are most potent in relaxing the mind-body, for example, static Qi Gong versus dynamic Qi Gong.
- To measure "the external Qi" emitted from a skillful Qi Gong master, such as low frequency infrared radiation, electromagnetic current, etc.

There is an old Chinese saying, "The present is always born out of the past." We conclude with the tenet that the time before the 20th century was the period of discovering the soul, spirit or mind, and if this century is the century of discovering the body's active molecular constitutions (substances), then the next century will be the century of discovering the connection between the two – the mind (soul) and the body (substances).

In the final analysis Qi Gong is a part of that connection.



The international Qi Gong laboratory in the future.

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