



**Creating Health, Vitality, and Inner Peace
Through Qigong and Tai Chi**



Practice Leader Training Guide

Roger Jahnke, O.M.D.

Disclaimer

Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Training Guide has been developed to support and empower individuals in their quest for better health, improved vitality, productivity, purpose and joy. There is no intended or implied advice contained in this program. Instead it maps out a pathway for personal well being through a process that has been used by thousands of people in a wide array of contexts, and by millions in China over several millennia. We ask that all participants and Practice Leaders progress slowly but steadily at a pace, which is natural and positive rather than forced or stress inducing. If you are using this program as an adjunct to your healing process, please consult with your health care team, case manager and physician.

Practice Leaders, please note

For those who complete the *Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Training*, this is not a Qigong and Tai Chi Teacher Certification. The minimum professional standard for Qigong teachers determined by the National Qigong Association is 200 hours of training. Additionally, each student must demonstrate proficiency as a teacher before certification is awarded.

This Practice Leader training will assist trainees in safely sharing the life changing practices of *Tai Chi Easy™*, in the context of a practice session led by a peer coach or Practice Leader.

For information on becoming a professional teacher of Qigong and Tai Chi, please visit <http://www.IIQTC.org>.

Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Training Guide

By Roger Jahnke, O.M.D.

Copyright ©2019 Santa Barbara, California

We grant the specific right to those who have been trained as *Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leaders* to make copies of brief sections of the training manual as handouts for the participants in their practice groups. Reproduction of the entire manual or a major portion of the manual is not permitted, nor is it permitted to charge a fee for copies. When making copies of training material, please include the following text:

“Adapted from the *Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Training Guide* with permission from the Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi.”

Table of Contents

Part One:	Tai Chi Easy™ - Introduction	7
Chapter 1:	INTRODUCTION	9
	Tai Chi Easy™ - A Citizen Empowerment Revolution	9
	The Tai Chi Easy™ Practices	11
	Principles of Cultivation for Maximum Vitality	13
	Key Principles of Tai Chi Easy™	15
	General Qigong and Tai Chi Practice Guidelines	16
	Health Benefits of Tai Chi Easy™	18
Part Two:	Tai Chi Easy™ - Tools & Methods	19
Chapter 2:	GENTLE MOVEMENT	21
	The Three Intentful Corrections	21
	Aligning, Opening and Concluding Tai Chi Easy™ Sequences	23
	Vitality Method - Flowing Motion	27
	Vitality Method - Right and Left Bending of Spine	29
	Vitality Method - Front and Back Bending of Spine	32
	Vitality Method - Reaching Upward, Stretching Outward	34
	Spontaneous Qigong	36
	Tai Chi Movement 1 - Harmonizing Yin and Yang	38
	Tai Chi Movement 2 - Brush Knee Send Qi (Chi)	40
	Tai Chi Movement 3 - Cutting the Path to Clarity	42
	Tai Chi Movement 4 - Watching Clouds Pass	44
	Tai Chi Movement 5 - Gathering Heaven and Earth	46
Chapter 3	BREATH PRACTICES	49
	Overview of Breath Practices	49
	Essential Breath, Sigh of Relief, and The Remembering Breath	50
	The Gathering Breath	52
	Xi, Xi, Hu Breathing with Walking Qigong	53
	Benefits of Breath Practice	55
Chapter 4	SELF-APPLIED MASSAGE	57
	Overview of Self-Applied Massage	57
	Reflexes of the Hand	59
	Reflexes of the Ear and Foot	60
	Self-Applied Massage of the Neck and Shoulders	61
	Tracing the Acupuncture Channels	62
	Energizing the Organs	63

Table of Contents

Chapter 4	SELF-APPLIED MASSAGE	
	Abdominal Massage	64
	Face and Eye Massage	66
	Benefits of Self-Applied Massage	68
Chapter 5	RELAXATION, VISUALIZATION & MEDITATION PRACTICES	69
	Overview of Relaxation, Visualization and Meditation Practices	69
	Progressive Relaxation	70
	Progressive Relaxation with Affirmation	71
	Marrow Washing Visualization	72
	Mindfulness	73
	Standing Meditation	74
	Benefits of Relaxation, Visualization, and Meditation Practices	75
Chapter 6	MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN TEN MINUTES A DAY	77
	The Momentary Ease Methods	77
	Awaken Healing Resources with Ten Second Tai Chi Easy™ Formulas	78
	Feel Better Fast with Ten Minute Tai Chi Easy™ Formulas	79
	Ten Minute Tai Chi Easy™ Massage Intensive	81
	Ten Minute Tai Chi Easy™ Tune Up	82
Part Three:	Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Resources	83
Chapter 7	TAI CHI EASY™ SYSTEM OF QIGONG & TAI CHI	85
	Design a Practice Session with Baskets of Methods	85
	Phases of Tai Chi Easy™ Presentation	86
	Tai Chi Easy™ Learning Curve	87
	Transitions for Suggested Tai Chi Easy™ Sequence	87
	Using Creativity for Tai Chi Easy™ Modifications	88
	Tai Chi Easy™ Modifications	89
	Easing into the Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Role	90
	The Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader's Secret	92
	What Is Your Learning Style?	101
	Leading By Example	102
	Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Profile	103
	Tai Chi Easy™ Resource List	104
	The Collaborating Partners	110
	[Chart] Summary of Tai Chi Easy™ Practices	112
	Integral Taiji (Tai Chi) Principles	113
	Handling Medical Emergencies in Your Classroom	116

Part One



Introduction

氣

Qi

A resource so essential and so fundamental that it is impossible to translate.

功

Gong

To cultivate - a practice or methodology

太

Tai

Supreme, absolute, immense

極

Chi

Ultimate balance and harmony

氣

Qigong

Working and playing with essential resource

功

Tai Chi

Supreme, ultimate balance and harmony

太極



Chapter 1. Introduction

Tai Chi Easy™ -- A Citizen Empowerment Revolution

Approximately 100 million people practice Qigong and Tai Chi in China daily. While the exact origins of these practices are unknown, scholars estimate that methods of meditative exercise were prevalent in China several thousand years ago. These practices have been used to explore the essence of life and increase vitality, longevity, and inner peace. They are the key components of self-care in Traditional Chinese Medicine but have only recently become widely available in China, as they were formerly only within reach of monks, physicians, warriors, ministers, scholars and the members of the imperial court. Just what is the secret of these methods that promise longevity of your creativity and vitality?

Underlying everything in our existence, according to the scientists and philosophers of ancient China, is a primary force which creates and sustains life. This essential resource, is called Qi, (Chi pronounced *chee*). Qigong, (Chi Kung, pronounced *chee gung*) the art of cultivating and harmonizing this life force, has been affectionately dubbed the grandmother of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Western science has become inspired by this life energy at every level.

Researchers are seeking Qi's equivalents physiologically, energetically and even in quantum physics. The rapidly proliferating popularity of acupuncture suggests that Qigong and its younger sibling, Tai Chi, will become widely used methods of health promotion.

Increasing the Body's Innate Capacity to Heal

Even the most sophisticated medical procedures and pharmaceuticals, including those from Chinese Medicine, are limited in their effect if one's essential life energy is exhausted. More than half of all Americans suffer from one or more chronic conditions — cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), arthritis, etc. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that health care costs for treatment of chronic disease accounts for over 75 percent

of the almost \$2.6 trillion in 2010 spent on healthcare in the United States. While these chronic health conditions are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States, they are also fortunately preventable or modifiable through simple changes to health risk behaviors. This is good news indeed, and scientific research is confirming the value of health promotion to increase the body's self-healing capacity.

Ancient Chinese Qi masters were mindful of the healing promise of inner resources thousands of years before the birth of modern science. They created simple, prevention strategies, Qigong, that magnify the life energy and increase the body's capacity to heal itself. They knew of, wrote about and created methods to produce the most profound medicine naturally within the human body – the “elixir of longevity,” the “healer within.”

These strategies complement medical treatment, speed recovery and are easily incorporated into the lifestyles of all kinds of people older, younger, the sick and the well. Whether you desire healing, healthy longevity, disease prevention, clarity of mind or inner calm, experts will tell you that mastering your inherent life energy is the key to success.

The Tai Chi Easy™ Practices

There are about 10,000 forms of Qigong, including several hundred varieties of Tai Chi. The Tai Chi Easy™ program was created by carefully reviewing many of the most popular, prevalent and beneficial of these forms to distill a set of practices that are easy to teach, easy to learn and easy to practice.

Tai Chi Easy™ consists of classic and simple Qigong including the four essential Qi cultivation methods:

- Postural alignment and gentle movement
- Breath practice
- Self-applied massage
- Relaxation, visualization and meditation practices

This compilation of practices is called the Vitality Enhancement Method and is known in China as a form of medical Qigong called Bu Zheng Qigong (Enhance Function Qigong). In addition, the Tai Chi Easy™ program includes a modification of traditional Tai Chi. This approach to Tai Chi can be used to help people learn the longer forms of Tai Chi. For this particular program five movements from traditional Yang Style Tai Chi are used either sitting (Tai Chi Chair) or standing.

They can eventually be used with Tai Chi walking to create a moving form. Some seniors or people in medical recovery will not be able to perform the Tai Chi walking form. However they can gain the benefits of Tai Chi practice by doing Tai Chi Easy™ or Tai Chi Chair. Both the Vitality Method and Tai Chi Easy™ are rooted in the basics of all Qi cultivation or Chinese self-care practices, the Three Intentful Corrections.

What is Tai Chi Easy™?

There is significant controversy about modifying traditional Tai Chi to make it accessible for cultures outside of China. Following substantial research throughout China on Chinese medicine and philosophy, Tai Chi and Qigong, only a very few have not concurred that Tai Chi should be modified to serve a wider array of populations.

Tai Chi Easy™ is not a kind of Tai Chi. It is a carefully developed approach, that makes Tai Chi easy, fun, and beneficial right away. So, the learner does not have to learn 108 traditional movements, or even a traditional short form of 24, 36, or 42 movements. Tai Chi Easy™ can be done in two move-

ments or three, called Tai Chi Three, or in a chair - Tai Chi Chair. So there could be Tai Chi Two Chair, or standing Tai Chi Three, or walking Tai Chi Ten.

Often, teachers of Tai Chi announce a class and a large group shows up all excited to learn the flowing exercise from China. After two lessons, when they realize its going to take a year to learn, they quit. Tai Chi Easy™ takes any form or style of Tai Chi and modifies it with one goal, keeping the learners inspired and participating. The Tai Chi Easy™ Method can be done with Yang, Chen, Wu, Sun or any other style.

Essentially, Tai Chi Easy™ takes five of the traditional movements from Tai Chi and does them in a stationary standing position or seated. As the process advances, the movements can be performed, combined with Tai Chi Walking. When the movements, whether two or three or ten, are performed in such a way that they are repeated to create a set or form, it is usually called Tai Chi Qigong. This is because modified Tai Chi is more like therapeutic or medical Qigong, especially when applied in rehabilitative, medical, or healing context.

Tai Chi Movement Names

Names are used to do two things: represent the movement and create an image. In Traditional Tai Chi, Brush Knee, Twist Step, Punch describes a martial movement. In a therapeutic environment, people relate more to images that evoke healing, peace of mind and inner harmony.

So in Tai Chi Easy™, that movement becomes Brush Knee which characterizes the body's action, and Send Qi, which describes an image of sending vital energy. Parting the Wild Horse's Mane has been confusing because it is neither descriptive of the movement nor particularly metaphoric of healing. Harmonizing Yin and Yang is metaphoric of the healing that is accessible by balancing the body's energies.

Please feel free to create names for the movements that are descriptive of the movement and are associated with healing and empowerment. The five Tai Chi Easy™ movements all have martial arts application; however, in the case of healing, stress management and disease prevention, the focus is all aimed at relaxation, gentle movement and meditation. For your reference, the traditional Tai Chi names and the Tai Chi Easy™ names of the movements are listed below:

Traditional Name	Tai Chi Easy™ Name
Parting Wild Horse's Mane	Harmonizing Yin and Yang
Brush Knee, Twist Step, Punch	Brush Knee, Send Qi (Chi)
Repel the Monkey	Cutting the Path to Clarity
Cloud Hands	Watching Clouds Pass
Gathering Heaven and Earth	Gathering Heaven and Earth

Principles of Cultivation for Maximum Vitality

Some approaches to Qigong and Tai Chi are associated with martial arts roots or ancient Chinese Daoist, Confucian, and Buddhist rituals. While these are sincerely respected and clearly the origins of vitality cultivation, the focus of Tai Chi Easy™ is the cultivation of healthy longevity and inner tranquility. In this context there is no straining or pushing. Instead the practices are very gentle, adaptable to all sorts of physical and psychological challenges and complementary to medical treatments, surgical procedures and every form of recovery and rehabilitation.

The Mother Principle -- Intention

Many believe that Qigong and Tai Chi are focused on the “forms” or “practices.” That is to say, it is important to learn a particular form or practice to get the best results. We know that the underlying principles, not the form, hold the power. Attaining maximum vitality is based on the intent and presence of mind that the practitioner brings to the practice.

Intent and conscious presence are embodied through the principles of Qigong and Tai Chi. The principles are enlivened and become dynamic in the forms or methods. So, the state is the supreme goal, the principles are the way that the goal is achieved and the forms or actual practices are the tools through which the principles are applied to achieve the intended outcome of improved health or stress reduction.

The Maximum Vitality State

In Chinese medicine, life and health are based on the optimal balance of the Qi (vital living capacity, life force, bioenergetic coherence); therefore the *Qigong state* is described in terms of Qi. In Western medicine, since optimal function is a physiological phenomenon, (interaction of the physiology and the psychology -- Mind+Body), the preferred state for self-healing and freedom from the negative effects of stress is described by mental and physical mechanisms.

In both cases maximum vitality is accessed through purposeful attention to posture, movement, breath and focused awareness, the practice of Qigong or Tai Chi. In the Chinese view the practice removes resistance from the flow of the Qi and assists the human system in sustaining an ample supply of Qi. Moving the body gently in an optimized posture, deepening the breath and clearing the mind to open the pathways of Qi flow allows Qi to circulate to the organs, glands and tissues and maximize function. This is the *Qigong state*.

In the Western view, Qi cultivation opens the blood vessels to carry a larger volume of oxygen and nourishment to the cells and tissues of the organs and glands. The breath increases the availability of oxygen to the blood and accelerates the lymph, which delivers the immune cells and eliminates metabolic byproducts from the cells.

Gentle body movement slightly accelerates the metabolism and optimum posture opens the spaces through which biologically active fluids are flowing. Clearing or relaxing the mind triggers a shift from the primarily sympathetic function of the autonomic nervous system, (traditionally known as *fight or flight*), to a level of function modified by the parasympathetic function, typically known as the *Relaxation Response*.

This creates a shift in the profile of neurochemicals and hormones from an active system that puts the self-healing capacity into the secondary position, to a restorative system that puts the self-healing capacity into primary position of function. This is the *Maximum Vitality state*.

In this maximized state, the functionality of the body's capacity for self-healing and self-regeneration is accelerated. Often this inner functional optimization is so strong that one can feel it. In China this is called *Qi sensation*. In the West most people are too busy to have noticed it. Those who do perceive it generally will say, "I feel relaxed and kind of tingly."

Key Principles of Tai Chi Easy™

The intent of the ancient Chinese cultivation practices is a state of “maximized vitality” known as the *Qigong state* or *Tai Chi state*. This is the state in which the human **body + mind + spirit** is “in the flow” or functioning with the least inner physical, mental or emotional restraint.

In Tai Chi Easy™, this state of “maximized vitality” fosters and supports the capacity for self-healing, disease prevention, personal growth, intuitive insight and clarity of purpose when guided by these four key principles:

1. Do the practices as best you can.

Just a relaxing deep breath, moving the body gently, or just doing some self-applied massage releases the body’s self-healing capacities. Doing the practices as best as you can, in a state of relaxation and enthusiasm, is far better than not doing the practices at all.

2. Remain in your personal comfort zone – safety zone.

Pain triggers stress and tension which neutralizes the inner healing resources. Inner healing resources are activated when you practice without pain or discomfort.

3. Adapt and modify for your body’s needs.

Every person, sick or well, old or young, is unique. While many forms of Qigong and Tai Chi are supposed to be performed consistent with tradition, and not be changed, Tai Chi Easy™ can be tailored and adapted to your specific needs. Practices that are typically done in a standing posture, may be adapted for people in wheel chairs, hospital beds or at their workplace (sitting or standing).

4. Sustain the Three Intentful Corrections of body, breath, and mind.

- Adjust the posture and movement.
- Focus on the breath.
- Clear the awareness, consciousness, mind with relaxation, meditation, visualization, affirmation.

General Qigong and Tai Chi Practice Guidelines

DO...

Keep it simple and fun.

Start with less and allow more to come, as it is appropriate. If this practice becomes a stressor in your life, it is more of a problem than a solution.

Relax deeply.

Allow the mind to be free of concerns and considerations. In China, this state of mind is sometimes called *cheerful disinterest*.

Practice Qigong daily.

Carefully and correctly implemented, it is safe to practice Qigong many times a day. Make your practice as much a part of your day as you do sleeping, bathing and brushing your teeth.

Make up your own routine.

Feel free to make up your own routine. Tailor the practices to suit your needs, likes and limitations.

Approach each practice with an intention to relax.

Always approach each practice session with an intention to relax. Direct the mind toward *cheerful indifference*.

Regulate the breath.

Regulate the breath so that both the inhalation and exhalation are deep, intentful, and calm

DON'T...

Try too hard.

Qigong is intended to assist you in self-healing and build up your endurance. Take it very easy. Ease helps to mobilize the Qi. Extra effort and trying hard go against the natural benefits in Qigong.

Going too far too fast will cause discomfort and you may say, “This is too much.” Then, the profound benefit is lost. Achieve your goal of healing by allowing yourself to be free from the stress and rush that cause the organs, tissues and glands to become deficient.

Be fooled by Qigong's simplicity.

Application of these simple practices mobilizes the body's healing power within you. An ancient Chinese adage says, "That which appears great on the outside is weak on the inside; that which appears to be inconsequential on the outside is great and powerful on the inside."

Do too much.

Bring Qigong into your life deliberately. Too much of such a good thing and you may say, "I don't have time for this." Then the remarkable possibility for self-restoration will be lost.

Expect too much, too soon.

Know that on occasion, extraordinary results occur right away. However, more often, dramatic results come over time with steady practice.

The most important thing to remember is....

Learning Tai Chi Easy™ or any approach to Qigong or Tai Chi can be frustrating, particularly if you are convinced that you "should" perfect the practice or get it "right." Follow the directions the best you can but then surrender to having fun.

People who benefit the most from the vitality cultivation methods create their own favorite practices. So, give yourself permission to invent some things too. Do the practice as it works best for you. The only way to be wrong about your implementation of these practices is to NOT do them.

Thus, the most important rule in Qigong is -- DO IT!

Health Benefits of Tai Chi Easy™

Practicing Tai Chi Easy™ triggers key physiological and psychological health benefits:

STRESS RELIEF

Induces a relaxed, meditative state of mind that helps relieve stress.

BALANCE

Emphasis on good posture and shifting of weight from foot to foot improves balance.

HEART HEALTH

Lowers your heart rate, lowers blood pressure and increases circulation by dilating the blood vessels.

IMMUNE BOOST

Gets your lymph flowing, eliminating waste and toxins and carrying specialized immune cells to fight disease.

MENTAL FOCUS

Calms your mind by slowing down brain wave patterns and improves focus and attention. Tai Chi Easy™ uses the power of healing imagery and affirmation and promotes a positive attitude.

Part Two



Tools & Methods



Chapter 2. Gentle Movement

The Three Intentful Corrections

According to physicians and scientists from China, Qi is everywhere. We are immersed in it, and it infuses us. You can begin right away to experience your inner resources for healing and peace of mind. The Three Intentful Corrections, a foundation practice common to all forms of Qigong and Tai Chi, is a beautiful form of Qigong, that can be completed in about fifteen seconds, and can be done standing, sitting, or lying down. One of my favorite teachers, Master Zhu Hui from Tian Tai Mountain in eastern China told me, “A person who makes wise use of the Three Intentional Corrections a few times a day will resolve their pains, cure their diseases, and achieve longevity.”

First Intentful Correction — Adjust and regulate your body posture or movement.

Sit or stand fully upright, or lie outstretched. Visualize a connection lifting the top of your head into the heavens lengthening your spine. Next visualize a connection from your sacrum to the center of the earth. The upward lift and downward pull opens the center of the body and fills the body with Qi. Adjusting your posture optimizes the inner flow of blood and lymph in your body.

Second Intentful Correction — Adjust and deepen your breath.

The breath is the most powerful tool for gathering Qi and is the easiest to practice. Inhale slowly through your nose, and hold your breath for a count of one, one thousand; two, one thousand; three, one thousand. Allow your breaths to be deep, slow and relaxed, but not urgent. On the exhalation, relax even more.

Third Intentful Correction — Clear your mind.

A Qigong proverb states, “When the mind is distracted the Qi scatters.” Briefly, focus your mind on something simple like clouds drifting across the sky, a prairie of grass in the breeze,

water moving in a river or waves against the shore. Smile gently. Relaxation cannot occur without the willingness of the mind. The essential point of the Third Intentful Correction is to hold the focus on something that does not produce stress or resistance in your body with an attitude of mindfulness, or awareness of the present moment.

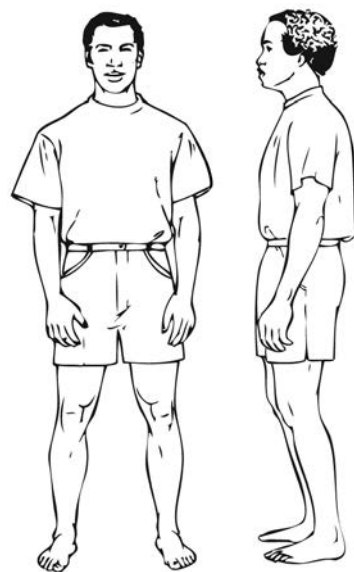
Use the Three Intentful Corrections throughout your day. This simple Qigong practice takes only moments and can be applied throughout your day, whether you are caught in a traffic jam, commuting on a train, standing in a grocery store line, or sitting in a business meeting or classroom. Be inventive in the ways you remind yourself to do this practice.

You could initiate the Three Intentful Corrections whenever the phone rings. If you hear a church bell near your home, you can use it as a reminder. Even a stoplight while you are driving can be used to prompt you to take a moment and give your body, mind and spirit a gentle nudge into Qigong.

Aligning, Opening and Closing Tai Chi Easy™ Sequences

The practice of cultivating health, healing, self, presence, consciousness, and inner peace with Qigong and Tai Chi begins and ends with the gathering and focusing of intent. The Three Intentful Corrections can be combined with what are called Aligning and Opening to begin the practice and with Closing to conclude.

These postures and movements mark the practice with a clear beginning and ending, which makes the implementation of the practices into a kind of practical ritual for exercise and meditation. This time that we commit to self-care can be devoted to fitness enhancement, health promotion, emotional resolution or spiritual focus. In all cases the practice is a kind of simple, practical sequence that is initiated and concluded with Aligning, Opening, and Closing.



Aligning -- Preliminary Posture

Stand, (you can align sitting or lying as well), with your feet close together but not touching. Your feet are shoulder width apart, with feet parallel. Knees are slightly bent; the bowl of the pelvis is balanced upright and the organs are in the bowl.

This causes the lower back to straighten as if you were standing against a wall. To accomplish this, you can place your hands on your belly and gently push in causing the lower spine to straighten. The spine is upright and erect. Lift the top of your head, insuring that your chin is not tucked but with a feeling of elongating the spine.

Imagine that a gentle force from Heaven is pulling you upward, as if a lock of your hair is being pulled gently upward into the universe. Your shoulders are relaxed and your arms are dangling comfortably at your sides.

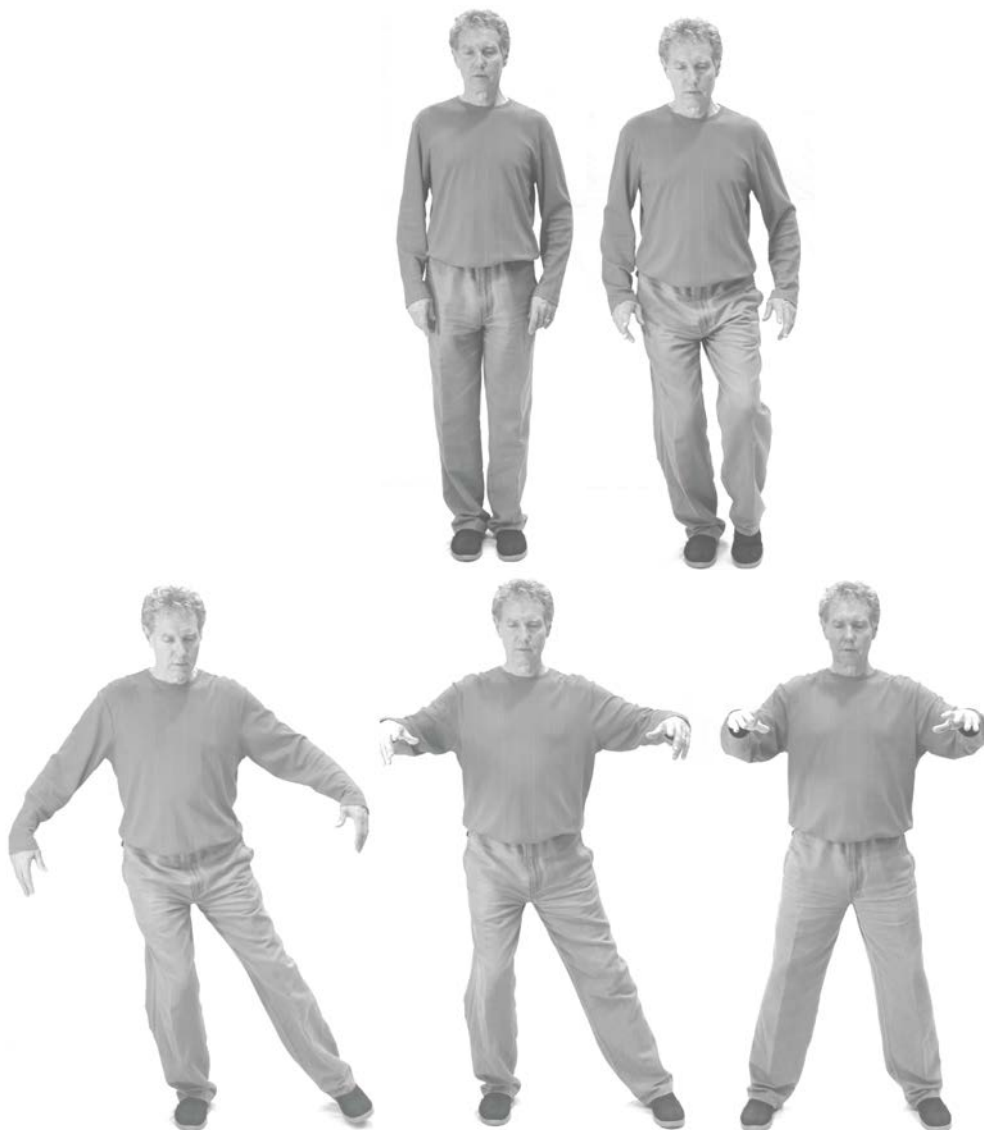
As Heaven is gently pulling your head and upper torso upward, Earth exerts a gentle force downward on your tailbone. The upper body rising and the lower body descending creates opening in the center between the umbilicus and the heart. The organs of the chest and abdomen have more space. In Qigong, this central openness fills with Qi.



Opening Sequence

Standing with your feet together, toes pointing forward, sink your weight and bend your knees gently. Shift your weight to one foot so that you are balanced with your weight completely on that foot. Step out to about your shoulder width. As you sink down, and shift your weight, your arms open outward. Inhale. Redistribute your weight evenly to both feet. Check to see that your lower back is elongated, and that your head is balanced on top of your upright spine. Allow your arms and hands to move effortlessly as you exhale.

The ending position of your hands will depend on whether you use this posture as a classic standing meditation or if you move into another Tai Chi Easy™ practice after the Opening Sequence. As you continue, “Mind the body and the breath, then clear the mind to distill the Heavenly elixir within.”



Closing Sequence

From whatever method you have just finished practicing — standing in the opening form, walking or from any form of Tai Chi or Qigong — open and outstretch your arms. Inhale. Both the movement and the breath suggest gathering Qi and healing resources. Shift your weight to the side and onto one foot. As you reach out imagine you are gathering healing and empowering resources from the whole cosmos. As your hands come over the top of your head begin to exhale. Bring the extended foot in to rest next to the weighted foot.

As you exhale slowly allow your hands to come drifting downward, passing the face, chest and abdomen. Bathe yourself in the healing Qi of the universe. Visualize that you are filling your body with powerful resources. Finally, place your hands on your low belly with the palms resting on the below your navel. Allow yourself to drift gently until you feel ready to move gently into your day.



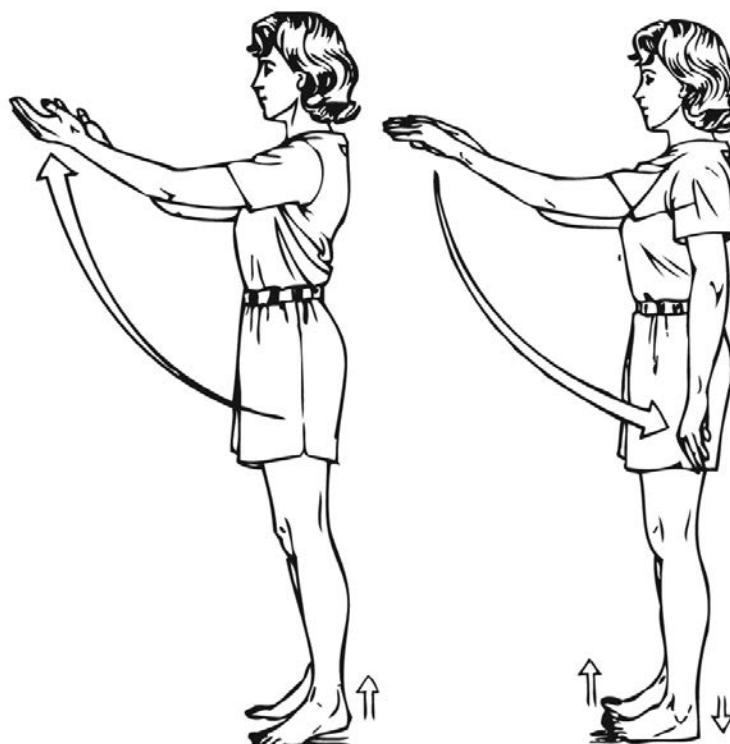
Notes:

Vitality Method -- Flowing Motion

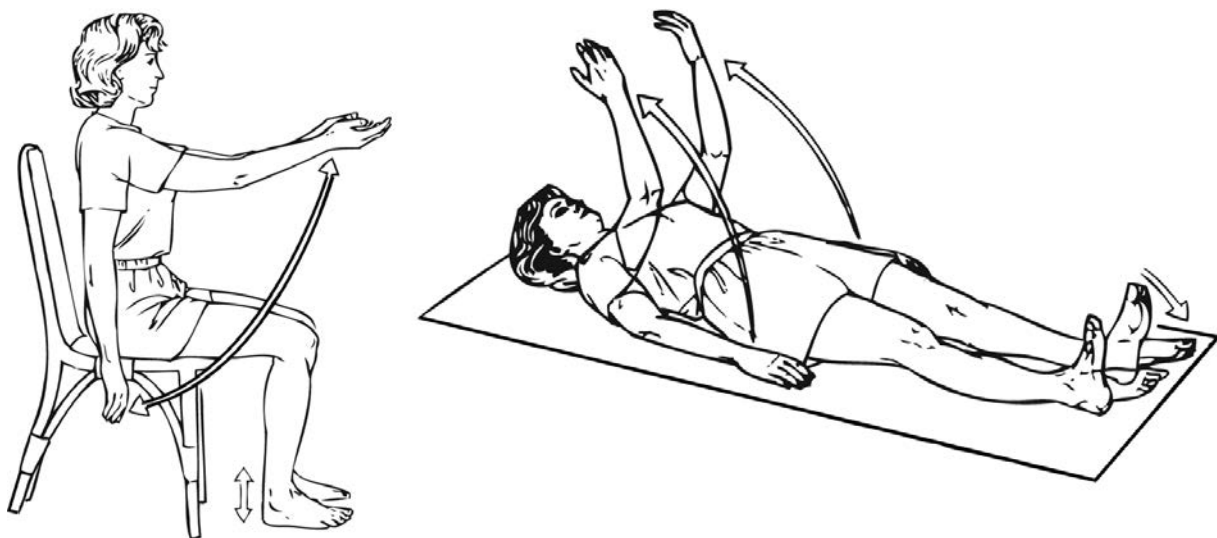
Standing in the Opening Posture, inhale slowly and deeply and turn your palms forward. Gently rock forward, lifting the body weight onto the toes. Swing the arms forward and upward, to the height of your heart or shoulders, with elbows slightly bent. Remember to feel free to do this movement in a way that is comfortable to you, and respectful of your body's limitations. Let your mind be free of concerns. As you exhale, turn the palms downward, and lower the arms. Slowly sink the body weight down so the feet are flat on the ground.

When the hands pass the legs, allow them to continue to swing to the back and lift your toes, rocking back on the heels if possible. Breathe deeply but do not strain. Repeat movement, building up a gentle rhythm. Once you get the Flowing Motion going, you will notice you can rest in the rhythm and flow. In China, this exercise is a favorite.

The Chinese say, *“Do this practice a thousand times a day and you will live forever.”* They also say, *“Do this practice a hundred times a day, and you will be healthy for a long life.”*



Flowing Motion Variations: Can be performed while lying down or sitting.



Flowing Motion Benefits: The gentle movement in Flowing Motion requires many of the body's muscles to demand increased energy, which accelerates the blood's circulation of oxygen and nutrients. The slow relaxed pace reduces the constriction that the autonomic nervous system often causes in the blood vessels so that the blood pressure is lowered. This in turn increases the circulatory potential of the oxygen and nutrients. In addition, the brain wave frequency is decreased into the alpha range, associated with the *relaxation response*.

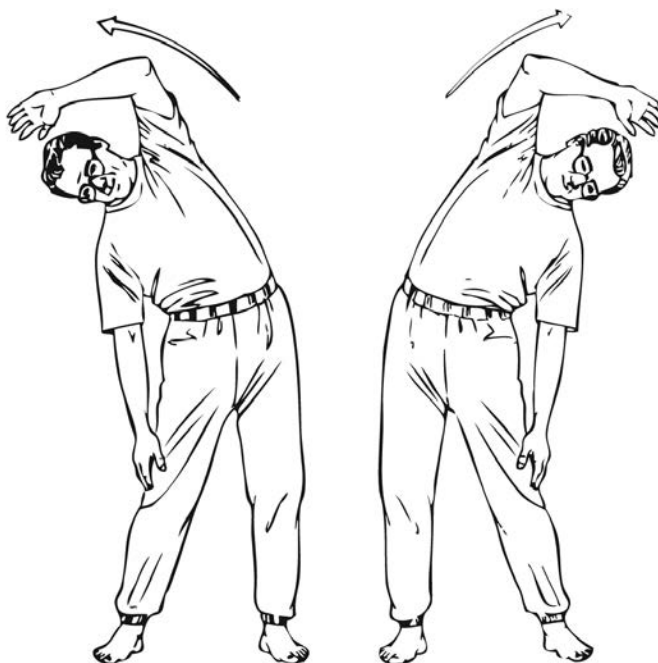
The deep breaths support deep relaxation. The breath also pumps the lymph system particularly in the body cavities where the organs are located. The movement of the arms also pumps the lymph in the axillary area where the arms meet the body, which is very helpful in circulating the lymph in the breast area in women. The contraction and relaxation of the leg muscles also pumps the lymph. Flowing Motion is an excellent practice to help maintain or regain endurance and balance.

Vitality Method -- Right and Left Bending of Spine

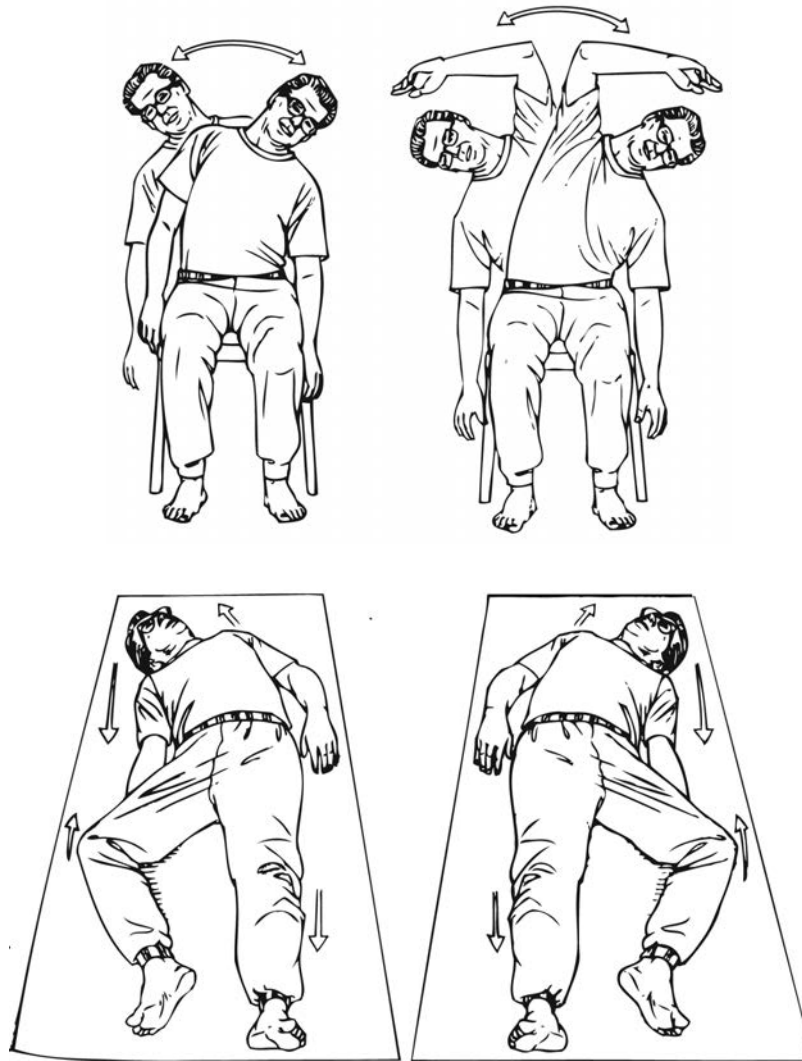


Beginning from the Opening Posture, bend the upper body to the right, exhaling. Allow the right arm to drop like spaghetti alongside the right leg. Dangle the head toward the right shoulder, like a melon on a vine. The left arm should drop gently across the front of the body. Slowly return to center as you inhale. Then bend the upper body to the left side as you exhale. Allow the left arm to drop like spaghetti along side the left leg. Dangle the head toward the left shoulder. The right arm should drop gently across the front of the body. Slowly return to center as you inhale. Continue alternately bending to both sides with deep, relaxed breaths.

If you would like a more challenging posture, stand with the legs a little wider than shoulder width apart and bend farther to the side. On the bending side of the body, use your upper leg to give support to the free arm and hand. On the stretching side of the body allow the arm and hand to reach up over the head. Repeat slowly to both sides, and connect with deep, even breaths.



Right and Left Bending of the Spine Variations: Can be performed sitting or lying down.



Right and Left Bending of Spine Benefits:

Right and Left Bending of Spine exercises the muscles along the spine, the neurological reflexes along the spine that correlate to the organs, and the connective tissue that holds the spine together. It is also excellent for maintaining lateral flexibility. This movement also massages the contents of the intervertebral discs toward the center of the disc, much like fluffing a small pillow between the vertebrae. Fluffing the disks maintains a healthy distance between the vertebrae, which allows room for the exit of nerves from the spine. Also Right and Left Bending of Spine alternately compresses and expands the rib cage, helping to increase the flexibility of the ribs and expand the rib cage's capacity in breathing. Organs on the compressed side are squeezed, creating the propulsion of lymph within them, which helps to eliminate waste products from the tissues.

Notes:

Vitality Method -- Front and Back Bending Spine

From Opening Posture, inhale and raise the hands upward, with the arms bent at the elbow at approximately a ninety-degree angle. The palms face the body as the arms rise; turn the palms downward when they are chest high, forward at face level, and then upward as the arms reach upward. The fingers are outstretched but relaxed. The chest area stretches and opens.

When the arms come above the shoulders, the palms face upward and the elbows are still bent, as if you are holding up the sky. Look skyward at your hands with your eyes wide open. Allow your tailbone to tilt backward, so that the curve of your spine is like a bow with the belly and chest forward.

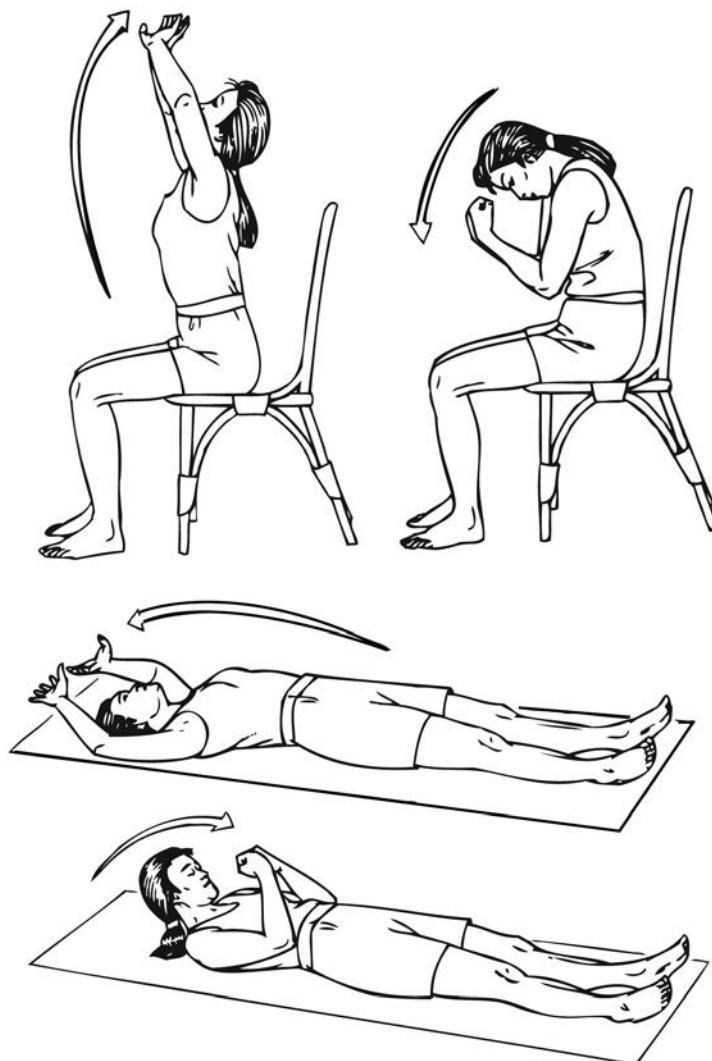
On the exhalation, the arms come forward and down, with the palms turning slowly toward the face. Clench your hands into fists that close tightly in front of your eyes. Press your fists together and contract your whole body. Bend your head forward, and round your shoulders forward. Let your exhalation be forceful and full. Repeat. On the inhalation, let your mind, body, and spirit feel calm and easy. On the exhalation, contract everything.

Front and Back Bending Spine Variations: Sitting and lying down.

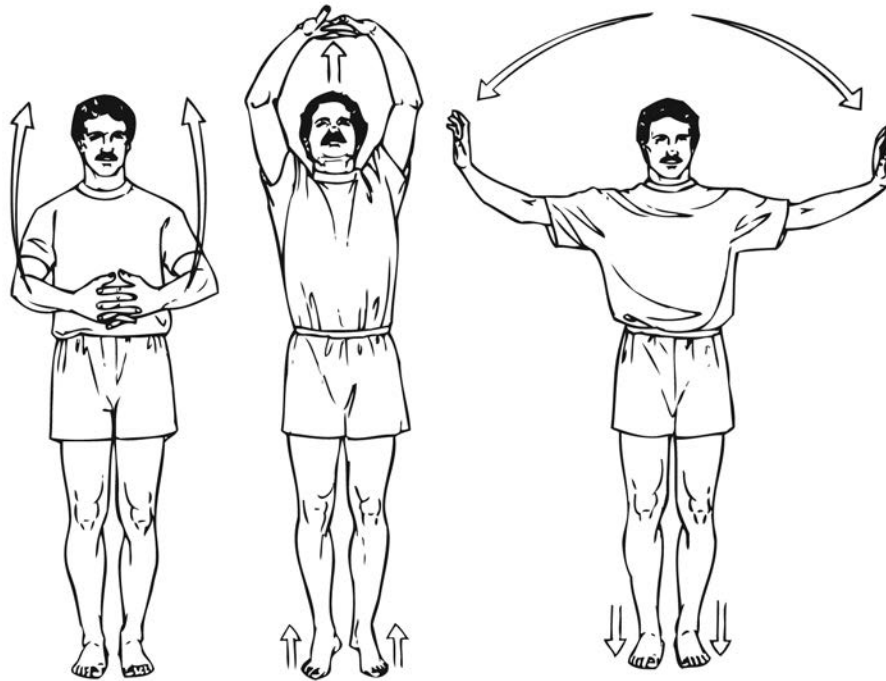
Front and Back Bending Spine Benefits:

When you take large breaths, the action of the diaphragm, the bending motions, and muscle contractions at exhalation pump the lymph dramatically and increase blood circulation. Forward and backward flexibility of the spine is maintained, and this acts as a perfect complement to Right and Left Bending of the Spine in keeping the intervertebral discs healthy.

Front and Back Bending Spine Illustration



Vitality Method -- Reaching Upward, Stretching Outward



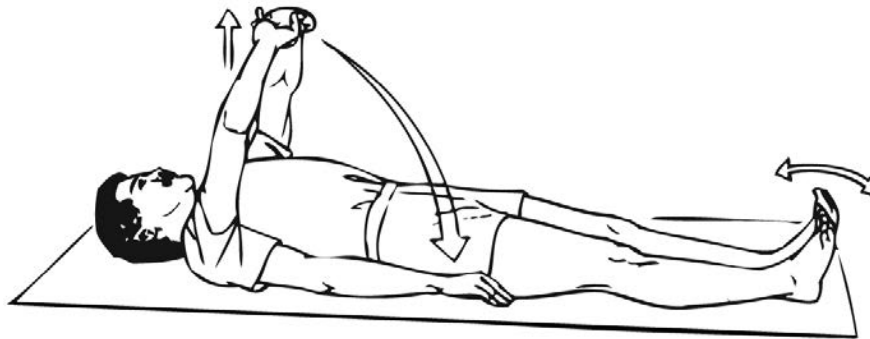
With either feet together or apart, inhale and lace the fingers together, bringing the palms facing toward the body, past the chest. As they pass in front of your face and eyes, rotate the palms so that they face downward, then outward, and then upward toward the sky. Extend the arms up and rise upward on your toes. Hold this position and your breath momentarily.

This ancient practice is called *Supporting Heaven*. Unlace the fingers as you start your exhalation. Extend your arms out to the side, and point your fingertips upward; with the palms facing out, reach away from the center of the body with the heel of the palm as you lower your arms. Also lower your heels. Repeat.

Reaching Upward, Stretching Outward Variations: Can be performed sitting and lying down.



Reaching Upward, Stretching Outward Variations



Reaching Upward, Stretching Outward Benefits: The rib cage is expanded as you reach up, which increases lung capacity and strength. Rising up on the toes strengthens your lower leg, aids balance, and pumps lymph from the lower limbs. As you deepen your breath in this practice, the lymph is pumped especially in the abdominal cavity when the diaphragm drops down. Relaxation also increases blood circulation and production of healing neurotransmitters.

Spontaneous Qigong

Spontaneous Qigong most likely originated 40,000-60,000 years ago from ancient shamanic rituals. The ancient names for Spontaneous Qigong -- Primordial Practice, Dancing Before Heaven and Dancing in Chaos -- all suggest that the method is used to reconnect with the aspect of oneself that is eternal. There is no detailed method to learn, and it is completely natural and intuitive. Yet, it is the best Qigong method for shaking out and detoxifying Qi stagnation or emotional patterns trapped inside.

Animals shake and tremble until they have cleared their nervous systems of a traumatic experience. Humans typically do not have such a tool, and therefore hold trauma in the nervous system. Spontaneous Qigong is a powerful healing practice for shaking out trauma, and is an excellent way to warm up for your Tai Chi Easy™ practice.

Find a comfortable place to stand where you have plenty of room to move about freely. Allow yourself to drift for a moment in the opening posture. Take time to align your body. Now begin to bounce, by lifting and dropping your heels. Do some variations on this, e.g. shift your weight so the right side is bouncing and the left is just along for the ride; now bounce the left and let the right side have a ride.

Next, add flopping your hands at the wrists, or snapping your fingers vigorously or better, rapidly flipping all of your fingers past your thumbs. Allow your head and neck to move about, lift and drop your shoulders, and even jump up and down. Do this for a few moments with deep, relaxed breathing. Now stop and turn your attention inward and feel the sensation. In your own mind, answer the question, *what do I feel and where do I feel it?*

Now, do the practice again. After bouncing, wiggling and snapping your fingers for a while, take in deep breaths and let out sounds that make you feel exhilarated – growling, shouting, laughing or sighing.

What gives you the most relief?

Make somewhere between five and ten sounds, while allowing the body to move freely. Music can support the release of emotions and makes Spontaneous Qigong even more effective.



Notes:



Tai Chi Movement 1 -- Harmonizing Yin and Yang

Tai Chi Movement 1 -- Harmonizing Yin and Yang

Figure 1a. After you Open, sink the tailbone down as if it is weighted and allow the head to rise as if a helium balloon lifts it up effortlessly. Raise both hands as high as the chest with the palms facing the chest.

Figure 1b. Bring the left hand, palm up across the front of the body, below the right hand, palm down, as if you are holding a beach ball. This often called *Tai Chi ball*, *Tai Chi sphere*, *the energy ball* or *Qi ball*. Your weight shifts slightly to the right foot. Use the Three Intentful Corrections and the Principles of Tai Chi to *relax, sink, expand, float*.

Figure 1c. Now, the left hand begins to move to the left, as if you are throwing a Frisbee, the palm is open, facing upward. The right hand gentle drifts downward to the right, palm facing downward.

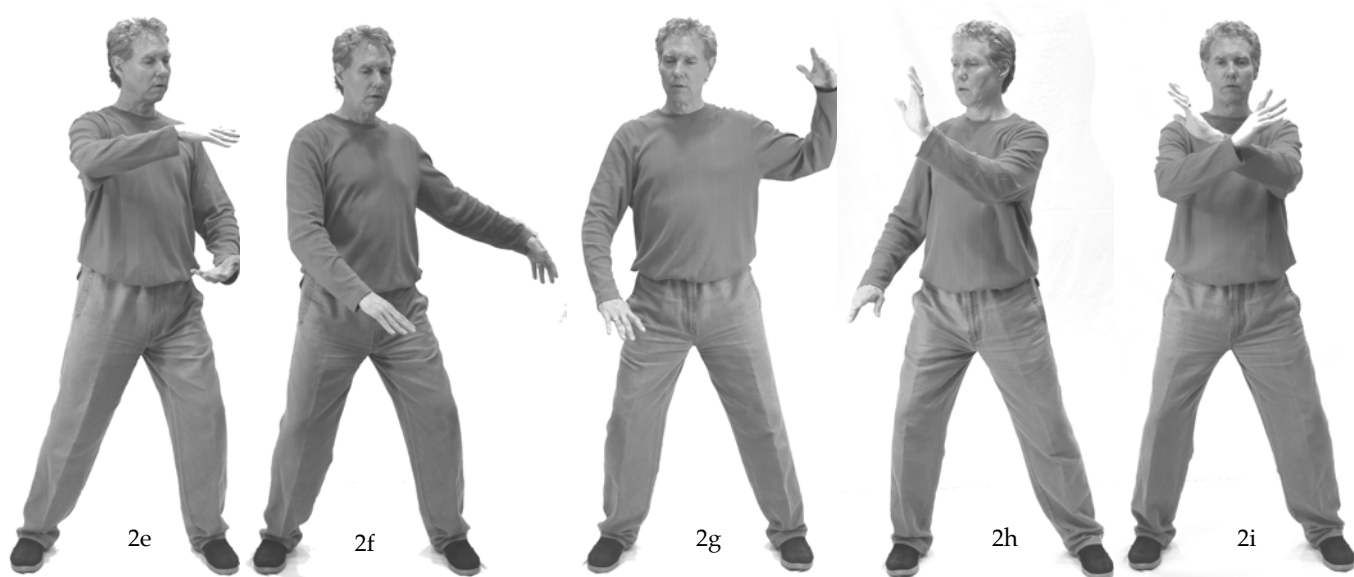
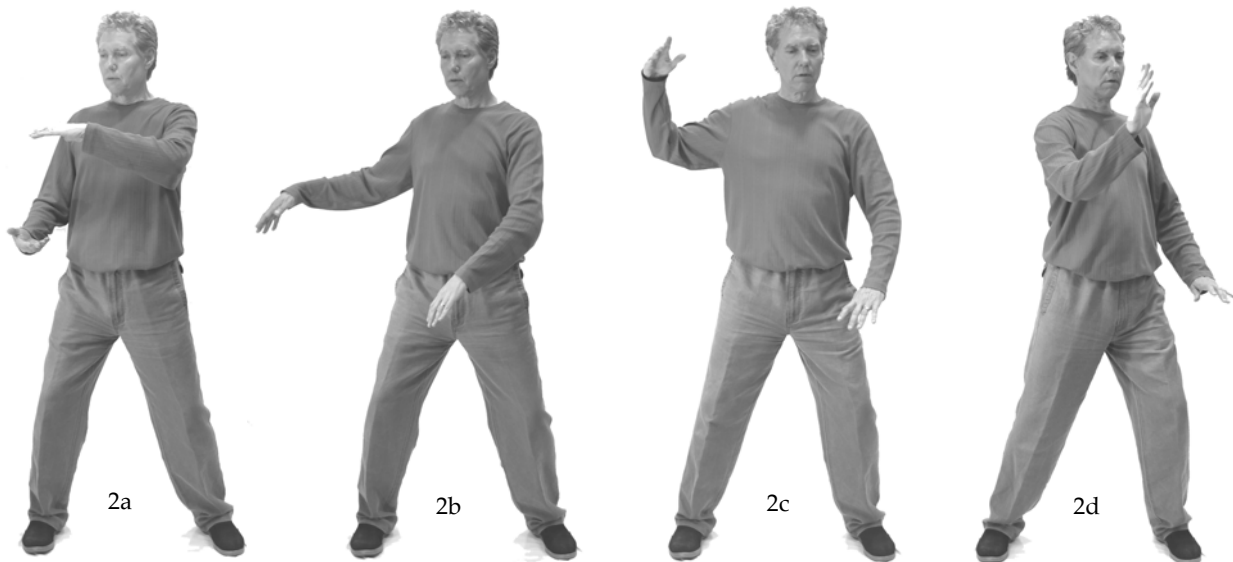
Figure 1d. The movement to the left is largely driven by the waist turning and by the weight shifting to the left foot. Right palm continues to float downward to about hip level, and left palm gently faces the chest. Fingers are gently separated.

Figure 1e. The motion continues and concludes fluidly with the right palm up across the body, the right arm gently curved across the torso, the shoulders relaxed and the left hand facing downward on the left hand side of the body, making an energy ball on the left.

Figures 1f. Next the right hand begins to move to the right, as if you are throwing a Frisbee, the palm is open, facing upward. The left hand gentle drifts downward to your left side, palm facing downward.

Figure 1g. The movement to the right is largely driven by the waist turning and by the weight shifting to the right foot. Left palm continues to float downward to about hip level, and right palm gently faces the chest.

Figure 1h. The motion continues and concludes fluidly until the left palm faces upward, the left arm gently curved across the torso, to the right side, the shoulders relaxed and the right hand facing downward on the right hand side of the body, making an energy ball on the right.



Tai Chi Movement 2 -- Brush Knee, Send Qi (Chi)

Tai Chi Movement 2 -- Brush Knee, Send Qi (Chi)

Figure 2a. To conclude Harmonizing Yin and Yang, and begin Brush Knee, Send Qi (Chi), turn your energy ball over by moving your hands clockwise to form an energy ball so your left hand is on top with palm down and right is on the bottom, palm upward.



Turning the Energy Ball Over

Figure 2b. Slowly, both hands drop downward.

Figure 2c. The left hand floats across the front of the body and brushes past the knees. The right hand that drops down by the side of the body continues backward, then rises forward as if you are swimming.

Figure 2d. The waist turns to carry the “swimming” right hand past the ear to “send Qi.” The weight shifts slowly toward the side to which you are turning to and sending Qi. The left “brush knee” hand finishes facing palm downward at the side of the leg.

Figures 2e. From position 2d, bring the right hand (the send Qi hand) on top of the energy ball, palm down and the left “brush knee hand” upward to “hold the ball,” palm upward.

Figures 2f-2h. Reverse the direction performed first in 2a-2d. Note you may repeat the movements to the other side (2a-2d). Continue for as many repetitions as feel appropriate.

Figure 2i. At the conclusion of Brush Knee, Send Qi, the upper (left) hand is sending Qi, the lower hand (right) is palm down. Bring the lower hand upward, turn towards the front and distribute your weight equally on your feet. The hand that raises upward forms a cross with the upper hand in front of the chest.



Tai Chi Movement 3 -- Cutting the Path to Clarity

Tai Chi Movement 3 -- Cutting the Path to Clarity

Figure 3a. At the beginning of Cutting the Path to Clarity, your weight is equally distributed on your feet, and your arms are crossed in front of your body about chest height. Palms face outward. The last hand that raised upward in Brush Knee, Send Qi is the farthest from your heart when they are crossed in front of your chest. In this example, the right hand is in front.

Figures 3b. The closest hand to your heart (the left), then, pulls toward the back and the outside hand (your right) pushes forward.

Figure 3c. Notice that as the torso turns, your arms are naturally carried in the appropriate directions with little effort. The right hand pushing forward leads with the pinky finger, like a “knife edge” cutting the air. The head turns to the side naturally. At the end, with only the slightest stop (more fluid, less static), the back hand turns to go forward and the front hand pulls toward the back.

Figure 3d. Both hands pass in front of your body about chin level and center of gravity is centered between right and left feet.

Figure 3e. Form a Qi Ball with the palms toward each other, with the bottom of the palms about shoulder level.

Figures 3f. This time the left hand pushes forward with the pinky finger, like a “knife edge” cutting the air. The head turns to the side naturally. At the end, with only the slightest stop, the back hand turns to go forward and the front hand pulls toward the back. Do as many repetitions as feel appropriate, alternating sides.

Figure 3g & 3h. Gradually bring both hands back in front of your body about shoulder height.

Figure 3i. Complete sequence by centering your weight equally on your feet, and crossing your arms in front of your body about chest height, right arm closest to the body, and left farthest away. The opposite hand is in front at the end of Cutting the Path to Clarity as is in the beginning, with palms facing outward.



4a



4b



4c



4d



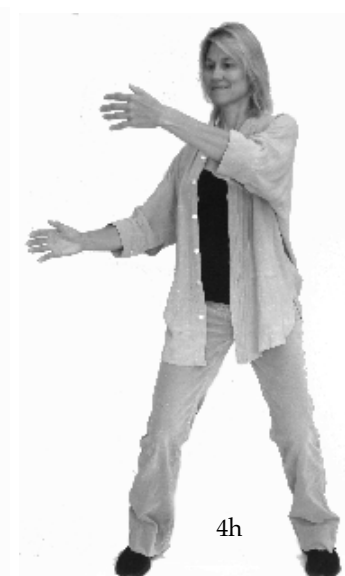
4e



4f



4g



4h



4i

Tai Chi Movement 4 -- Watching Clouds Pass

Tai Chi Movement 4 -- Watching Clouds Pass

Figures 4a. Begin with both arms crossed in front of the chest, as in the end of Cutting the Path to Clarity, with the weight distributed equally on both feet.

Figure 4b. Open the arms to make arcs away from the center of the body about your shoulder height as you shift your center of gravity to your left foot. Elbows are slightly lower than your shoulders, and your hands about chin level.

Figures 4c. Next, move your right arm down in an arc, with your hand open in a scooping motion. Left hand opens away from the body and is about chin level.

Figure 4d. Continue this movement until your right hand comes about the height of your left rib cage. Move your left hand, with the palm angled slightly down, to just above your right hand, about chin height. Your weight is on your left foot.

Figure 4e. Then, gently lowering the left arm, move your left arm down in an arc, with your hand open in a scooping motion across your body, and your right arm rises and moves across the body.

Figure 4f. Continue this movement until your right hand comes about to chin level on the right side of the body with the palm toward the face, and angled slightly open. The left hand is about waist height with the palm gently angled toward your torso. Weight is on the left foot.

Figure 4g. Both arms are on the right side of the body, with right hand high, and the left hand low.

Figure 4h. Lower your left hand to waist height, and raise the right hand to chin level, with the palms gently toward the torso.

Figures 4i. Finish by raising your arms until they are crossed in front of your chest.



Tai Chi Movement 5 -- Gathering Heaven and Earth

Tai Chi Movement 5 -- Gathering Heaven and Earth

Figure 5a. Begin by standing in an easy “horse stance” with the arms crossed in front of your chest, palms toward your body.

Figure 5b. Open your arms out to the 45 degree angle, palms facing toward each other.

Figure 5c. As you bend your knees, slowly release your arms so that the palms are facing upward.

Figure 5d. Float gradually down and sink down to gather the Yin energy of Earth. It is important to be careful of your back and knees so only sink as far as is comfortable. Gather the Yin energy of Earth in your arms.

Figures 5e. Rise up, carrying the Yin Earth energy upward and return to the position with your arms crossed in front of your heart.

Figure 5f. Gradually begin to open your arms, slowly reaching up into the Heaven. Look upward between your hands.

Figures 5g & 5h. Gather the resources of Heaven and carry them downward until your palms are facing each other, holding a small Qi ball) are as high as your chin. Repeat as desired. Conclude with the Closing gesture.

Notes:



Chapter 3. Breath Practices

Overview of Breath Practices

It is unusual to us in the western world to consider the importance of breathing techniques. After all, we are always breathing, are we not? Notice your own breathing. Is your breathing shallow? Does your posture or position encourage or restrict your ability to take full breaths? If you pay attention carefully, you will probably realize that you are using less than one quarter of your lung capacity.

There are numerous beneficial physiological mechanisms that are triggered when we turn our attention to the breath and then increase its volume. When volume, rate and attention level are all altered, dramatic physiological and even emotional changes can occur. The action of the lungs, diaphragm and thorax are a primary pump for the lymph, as the lymphatic system has no heart.

This mechanism may be more important to transporting the lymph than body movement. In addition, the breath is the source for oxygen, which is the key element in the body's ability to produce energy. The act of relaxed, full breathing moves the function of the autonomic nervous system towards balance or homeostasis.

From the traditions of the ancients we know that breathing practices are important. Why would they continue to employ techniques that were ineffective? Empirical science, the scientific method of all original cultures, is based on trial and error. That which has value is kept and employed. That which is found to have little or no value is dropped.

We also know that these practices are important through clinical experience. Patients who have learned and used breath practice as a part of their daily self-care respond more quickly to treatment, no matter what type of physician they are seeing. Healthy individuals adapt to greater stress and have greater endurance when they keep breath practice in their daily self-care ritual.

Inspiration is the rush that one feels when overtaken by spiritual energy. It is the force that impels one forward into life, and is the divine influence that brings forth creativity and vitality. Inspiration means also, *to breathe in*. The breath is a link to the most profound medicine that we carry within us.

Within this nearly unconscious act of breathing, which we enact 1,261,440,000 (1.25 billion) times in our life span, there is a simple yet profound healing capability.

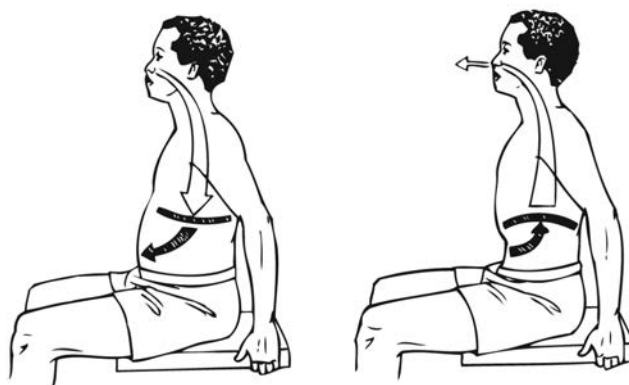
Our first act when we emerge from the womb is to inspire. Our last act is to expire. These breaths, first in and finally out, are like parentheses that encompass our corporal life. It is no surprise that the breath would be so remarkably linked to the power of healing. Many Qigong classic texts emphasize that *the breath is the handle*. Imagine a hammer without a handle. How do you use the door without the handle? The breath is the handle that makes the tool of Qigong more effective.

While many teachers insist that the benefits of Qigong are attained with the mind, Dr. Felix Chang, a physician from New York, accurately opposes this view. *“Stop breathing and focus the mind for three minutes. What happens? You die, or pass out. That does not really suggest that the mind has a more powerful effect than the breath; it is the opposite. Now, breath in deeply; it makes you strong. We do this to lift things, and in Kung Fu, to deliver the punch with the exhalation. Now, breathe out completely, and hold the breath out -- feel how quickly you start to get weak and need to breathe. The breath is a master key in Qigong.”*

Essential Breath

If you watch a newborn baby breathe, you can see the belly rise and fall gently. The baby breathes naturally, freely expanding the abdomen and chest. For us who may have become accustomed to breathing in a shallow manner, we can begin to change our breathing to allow more vitality in our bodies.

First, adjust your posture so that your lungs, chest and belly can expand freely. You can do this by sitting, standing erect or lying down. Breathe in through your nose, allowing the abdomen to expand as you inhale; exhale slowly through the nose. Repeat until you feel connected to more peace and well being.



Essential Breath Illustration

Sigh of Relief

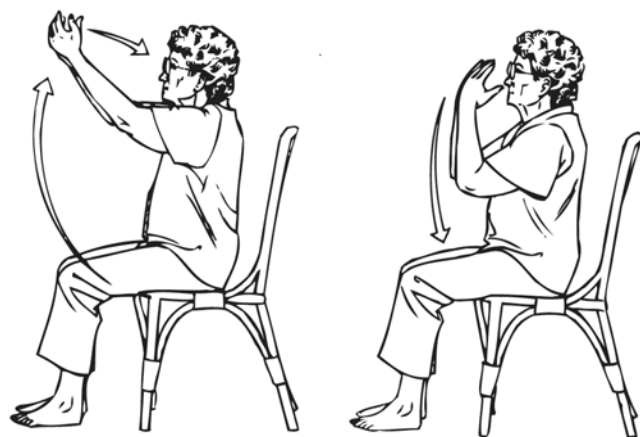
A breath practice you can use throughout your day is Sigh of Relief. Rather than store anger, worry or frustration in your body, it is preferable to release these poisonous emotions. Breathe in deeply as you can, and on the exhalation, release with an audible sigh. The sigh can be soft and sweet, expressing peace and happiness, or it can be a loud groan, freeing discordant tensions from the body. Do several times until you experience a shift in your tension or emotion levels. Sigh of Relief gets your internal medicine moving immediately.

The Remembering Breath

Take an Essential Breath anytime you remember to do it. If you are standing in a grocery store line or your cell phone rings, make the decision for greater relaxation and take a deep inhale, filling the abdomen, rib cage and chest with vitalizing breath.

The Gathering Breath

Sitting down, with the hands starting in the lap, or standing in the Preliminary Posture with the hands dangling at the sides begin to inhale and move the hands outward and upward as if you are scooping something useful, even precious, from the air around you. When your hands are slightly above and in front of you, the inhalation should be complete. Then bring your hands, side by side, palms facing you, toward your head. Then move them slowly down in front of your face, in front of your chest, in front of your abdomen, exhaling.



When your hands reach the navel area, linger for a moment and then repeat. Many people find this breath practice very calming. A meditation practice coordinated with gentle movement, often makes it easier for people to relax.

Many who have found it difficult to take a full, deep breath have discovered that the arm movement helps to open up the rib cage and fill the lungs.

Gathering Breath Illustration

In China this movement and breath practice is part of a powerful Qigong method called Marrow Washing which gathers energy (Qi) from nature and then purposefully stores it in the marrow of the bones, like electrical potential in a battery. As the hands pass over the body, focus intently on the energy penetrating through the surface of the body, through the flesh and muscles, and through the surface of the bones to be stored in the marrow. This stored energy becomes an available resource to vitalize the organs and glands, harmonize imbalances, and heal disease.

Allow yourself to float free of concerns and simplify your thoughts. Move toward a state of mental neutrality where you are simultaneously cheerful and indifferent. You may, if you wish, imagine or visualize that you are gathering healing energy from around you—from the Universe, Heaven, God, or a marvelous pool of healing waters. Bathe yourself gently in this rich resource. Allow the healing energy to penetrate deeply to nourish the organs and glands. As you relax in this practice, you may feel the warmth of your hands as they pass in front of your face. The Chinese call this *Qi sensation*. Rest in the rhythm of the movement, allowing the breath to be natural as you go deeper into relaxation. Notice that very soon you begin to feel carefree and lighter.

Xi, Xi Hu Breathing with Walking Qigong

Xi, Xi Hu (pronounced *she, she, who*) Breathing is easy to learn and apply. Simply inhale twice (*Xi*), followed by a simple exhalation to empty the lungs (*Hu*). There are a number of variations of this method. Allow the first inhalation to be an abdominal breath that fills the lower lobes of the lungs and expands the lower belly. Allow the second inhalation to fill the upper lobes of the lungs and expand the rib cage. Follow with one single exhalation. Or just use two deep inhalations that are full, slow, and deep to completely fill of the lungs, following by one exhalation to completely empty the lungs.

A variation of this method, widely used in China, combines a walking form of Qigong with *Xi, Xi, Hu Breathing*. It is easiest to begin by walking normally. Then shift the pace significantly into slow motion. Walk slowly and add a little stylized flourish to the movements. If you were to speed it back up it would no longer be regular walking. Practice this for a while. It is simply walking slowly. Work with the breath if you wish. Remember this is a moving meditation. The mind focus is very important. Be mindful of walking, focusing on the breath, repeating an affirmation to yourself such as, *I am walking toward my renewed self or each step I take is healing me.*

Later you might modify it this way. As you are walking slowly “sweep” your palms in front of you on each step. As the right foot steps forward and you shift your weight onto it, your hands pass like a pendulum in front of your belly toward the left. Release a long slow exhalation. As your left foot steps forward and takes the weight, your arms swing to the right past the belly, inhale in two puffs. Right foot, long exhale, hands left. Left foot, inhale two puffs, hands right. [See illustration on next page.]

After walking like this for a while, in either the first casual version or the second more specific version, many people have significant sense that something has altered inside. Because this can be described in a few lines, many will think that this is just walking and that it could not be that powerful. Millions of people in China swear that doing this practice has literally changed their lives and even saved their lives.



Xi, Xi Hu Breathing with Walking Qigong

Benefits of Breath Practice

There are numerous beneficial physiological mechanisms that are triggered when we turn our attention to the breath. When attention to the breath and breath rhythm is altered, dramatic and even emotional changes can occur. The interaction of the lungs, diaphragm, and rib cage is a primary pump for the lymph fluid.

This mechanism may be more important to lymph propulsion than muscle contractions and body movement, which are generally accepted mechanisms for propelling the lymph fluid. Together, the breath, body movement, muscle contraction, and several other associated physiological activities create a “lymph heart.”

You can live for weeks without food, and for days without water, but you can only survive a few moments without breathing. The breath is the source of oxygen, which is the key element in the body’s ability to produce energy. In addition, the act of full relaxed breathing shifts the function of the autonomic nervous system toward a state of balance, by shifting the neurotransmitter profile and slowing the brain wave frequency.

Notes:



Chapter 4. Self-Applied Massage

Overview of Self-Applied Massage

Every ancient culture on our planet has a system of “hands-on” healing. Today, we generally call these practices massage. However there are numerous systems in which the hands address the body in a therapeutic way. Examples are reflexology, sports massage, trigger point therapy, rolfing, acupressure (tui na, in Chinese) and polarity to name a few. While there are many massage techniques, there are two primary approaches to self-applied massage.

First, one applies pressure and friction to points of the ears, hands, and feet that are reflexes to other parts of the body. These reflex areas are called microsystems. A microsystem is a small, local representation of the whole body. Thousands of years of practice and experience have demonstrated that the ears, hands, and feet are such areas. Each individual part of the human body has an associated reflex on the ear, the hand and on the foot. In the Western world, this is typically called reflexology. Acupressure and shiatsu are the Asian pressure-point equivalents of reflexology. Acupressure is an English word for Chinese pressure point massage; shiatsu is the Japanese name for the same process.

Second one applies kneading, stroking, pressure, friction, tapping and gentle holding to specific areas of pain or dysfunction with the intention of creating relief. In the reflex, acupuncture and acupressure systems, massage affects the distant part of the body. Both of these systems have an effect locally as well as by reflex. A simple rule applies: the greatest effect of massage will be gained from combining the benefits of treating the specific area of concern along with the reflex areas of the hands, feet, and ears. When self-applied massage is applied with other self-care methods, you will experience a profound renewal of health over time.

Self-Applied Massage of the Hands

The basic technique of self-applied massage for the hands is the same as for the feet. However, the hands are much easier because they are so easy to reach. Without sitting down or having to remove your shoes you can go right to work. You can do this anywhere at any time. There are certain ancient theories in Chinese medicine that links areas of the hands to particular organs and functions. In one

system associated with the ancient classic of philosophy, the *I Ching*, the palm of the hand is depicted as a bowl with the aspects of nature around its interior.

Massage your hands all over with firm pressure. Notice areas of tenderness. Return to the tender areas and administer firm pressure for a few minutes. These tender areas are associated with organs and functions that are not operating at their most healthy levels.

In a series of workshops on self-massage I have asked people to find the most tender area on their hand. Each person, in turn, described the area. I would, at this point, make an educated guess what body area or function they had their primary health problem with. In nearly 100% of the cases the tender area that the individual described led to an accurate “educated” guess of their primary health problem

Self-Applied Massage of the Feet

The toes and ball of the foot are reflex to the upper part of the body. The central area of the arch is reflex to the torso. The heel is related to the parts of the body below the waist. Simply find the sore points and work on them.

First, do pressure massage over the entire foot. Usually the bottom of the foot is the primary focus; however, the top of the foot and the ankle area are rich with reflexes as well. As you are massaging the whole foot, note areas of particular tenderness. These are the reflexes that need it the most. Stimulating them and working out the soreness will help the organs, glands and tissues that are associated through the reflex mechanism to function in a more effectively. Generally, use your thumbs to apply the pressure.

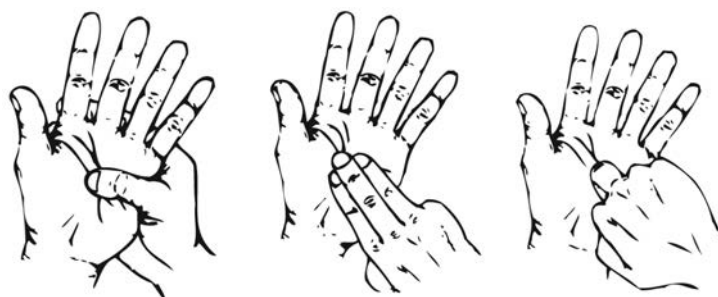
It will take a while to build up your thumbs. Alternate the techniques for pressure application by using bunched, extended fingers, the knuckles, the heel of the hand or a gripping motion where the whole hand provides the force for pressing inward with the four fingers. Start with light pressure and work up to substantial pressure. Imagine the pressure necessary to impress a new tennis ball or the force necessary to pick up a brick between your thumb and index finger. These are images to give you guidance on the amount of pressure necessary. If it hurts, back off. Notice that over a few days generally the amount of soreness will change.

Self-Applied Massage of the Ears

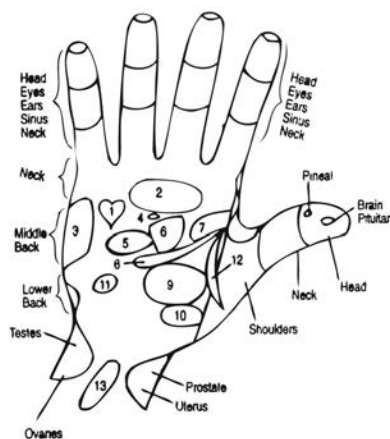
Traditional Asian medicine always has some type of massage stimulation to the ears. When you work on your ears, you will notice that within four to five minutes of vigorous massage your ears get hot. This is caused by the increase of blood flow to that area. The Chinese say, "When the blood is increased to an area, the energy (Qi) is increased to that area as well." If you have someone else rub your ears, you will notice that your ears are extremely sensitive because the ears are heavily innervated.

The combination of the presence of the nerve, the effect of the pressure and the heightened circulation causes stimulation to the reflexes of the microsystem of the ear. Through this reflex microsystem, all parts of the body can be influenced through pressure massage to the ear. Massage of the ear is similar to massage of the foot and hand. Begin with moderate pressure and work over the entire ear on both sides. Notice areas of discomfort. Return and work the uncomfortable areas vigorously.

Reflexes of the Hand

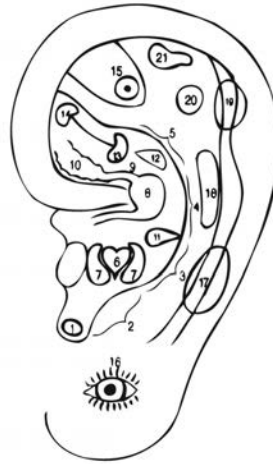


1. Heart (left hand) and thymus gland
2. Lungs
3. Liver (right hand) and shoulders
4. Solar plexus
5. Pancreas
6. Kidneys and adrenals
7. Stomach
8. Large intestine
9. Small intestine
10. Bladder
11. Appendix
12. Thyroid
13. Sacrum and pelvis



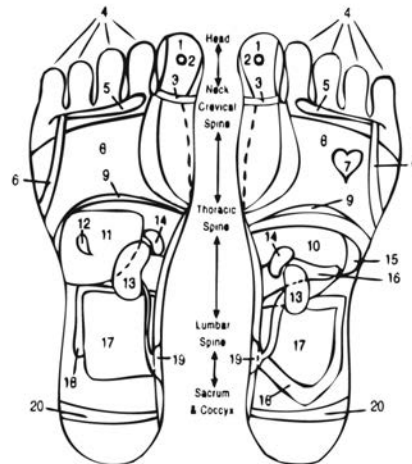
Reflexes of the Ear

1. Endocrine glands and hormones
2. Head and brain
3. Neck
4. Upper and middle back
5. Lower back
6. Heart and thymus gland
7. Lungs
8. Stomach
9. Small intestine
10. Large intestine
11. Spleen
12. Liver
13. Kidney
14. Bladder
15. Nervous system and spirit
16. Eyes and face
17. Shoulders
18. Arm and elbow
19. Hand
20. Leg and knee
21. Foot



Reflexes of the Foot

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Head and brain | 11. Liver |
| 2. Pituitary and pineal glands | 12. Gall bladder |
| 3. Throat and thyroid gland | 13. Kidney |
| 4. Sinus | 14. Adrenal gland |
| 5. Eyes and ears | 15. Spleen |
| 6. Shoulder | 16. Pancreas |
| 7. Heart | 17. Small intestine |
| 8. Lungs and thymus gland | 18. Large intestine |
| 9. Diaphragm and solar plexus | 19. Bladder |
| 10. Stomach | 20. Sacrum and sciatic nerve |



Self-Applied Massage of the Neck and Shoulders



Many of us carry our tension in our neck and shoulders, and these trouble spots can be the beginning for back pain and headaches. If you start to feel tension while performing your daily routine, first take a deep breath and release with a sigh. As you inhale you can bring the shoulders up by the ears, and as you exhale allow the shoulders to release. Repeat until you feel a sense of relaxation and warmth in your shoulder and neck area.

To further release the neck and shoulders, you can do easy self applied massage routines. Take your right arm and hand and reach it across the front of your chest, as if you are hugging yourself. Use your left hand to support the right elbow. Cup the fingers of your right hand and start rubbing the sore, tense areas. You can use the Sigh of Relief to further assist your relaxation on your exhalation. Be sure to switch sides.

Use your imagination. If vigorous massage is too painful for you, rub your palms together until you feel the warmth and energy radiate. Place your warm hands on the area of your neck or shoulders that needs the attention. Breathe in and out at least three times, or until you feel your palms cool. Then rub them together again until warm, and apply gentle pressure, using your breath to untie the knots.

Tracing the Acupuncture Channels

Traditional Chinese Medicine states that the vital energy (Qi) circulates in the human body to sustain health and coordinate functions of the organs. The channels for the flow of vital energy travel up the front of the body, and down the back. When Tracing the Acupuncture Channels, lightly stroke the body's surface or run the hands just above the surface of the skin. Chinese Medicine and many Western scientists believe that the energy resonates in and around the body like a magnetic field.

Start by rubbing your palms together until they feel warm. Then as if you are washing your face, starting at the neck and chin, pass your hands up and over the cheeks, eyes, and forehead. Pass your hands over the top of your head, down the back of your head and neck and shoulders. Visualize that you are standing in a pool of healing waters. Move your hands around to the front of the shoulders, under the armpits, and reach around your back and as high on your back as possible. Continue down the spine, over the sacrum and down the backs of the legs.

As you bend over, take care to stay in your comfort zone. Keep your knees bent if you have back problems. Bring your hands around the front of your ankles, across the tops of your toes and move your hands up the inside of the legs. If you are unable to touch your toes, even with your knees bent, reach down only as far as you can comfortably, and bathe the front of your legs, pelvis, belly, and chest.

When you are in front of your heart, rub your hands together again. Allow your breath to be full, and deep and drift deeper into relaxation. If you have thoughts, let them pass like watching clouds pass, and then begin again. After you have done several rounds take a moment with the palms of the hands facing each other, and feel the energy between your hands.

Variation of Tracing the Acupuncture Channels: This method can be easily adapted for a sitting practice.



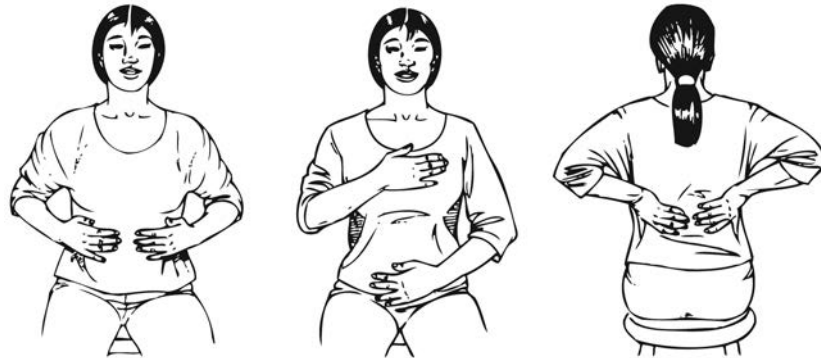
Tracing the Acupuncture Channels Illustration

Energizing the Organs

Place the hands over the lower edge of the ribs, near the sides of the body but still on the front. Beneath the right hand is the liver, the gall bladder, and the upper right hand portion of the large intestines. Beneath the left hand are the spleen, the pancreas, the stomach, and upper left hand portion of the large intestines.

Rub the open palm against the surface of the body in a circular motion. Eventually you will begin to feel warmth or perhaps a tingly sensation. Then hold your hands still and feel the warmth penetrating the surface of the body and migrating to the organs. Allow your breath to be full and luxurious. Think a moment about how these organs have faithfully served you for your entire life. Imagine sending your gratitude to them on your exhalation.

Move your hands so that one is over the sternum (breastbone) and the other is over the navel. Again rub in a circular motion and build up warmth. Stop and hold the hands still, sensing the warmth and sending gratitude to the heart, lungs, thymus gland. Take your time.



Finally, allow your hands to move to the lower back. Build up warmth by rubbing the hands up the back. Allow the inner benefit of your smile of appreciation to travel to the kidneys and the adrenals, considered in Traditional Chinese Medicine to be the dwelling place of essential life energies. Imagine their delight at having received your acknowledgement after all of these years.

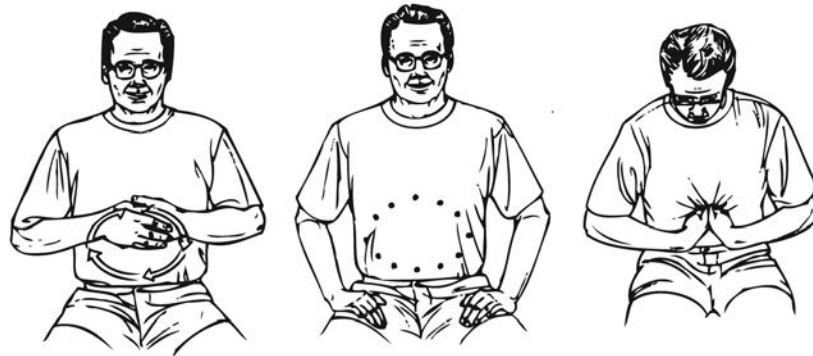
Complete by bringing both hands to the front, to rest on the belly just below the navel. Remain for a moment longer in a state of deep rest. Allow the mind to be free. Following these self-massage gestures, along with focused breathing and deep relaxation, your organs and glands are in a highly coordinated and energized state. In this state, the healer within is particularly active and your capacity to produce internal healing resources is optimal.

Abdominal Massage

When you reach the level just below the sternum (breastbone), place one hand over the other and begin a circular motion following the pathway of the colon. This is clockwise, with the clock lying on your navel facing away. Rub either with gentle friction or at the distance of about an inch from the surface of the body.

Starting from the point below the sternum, pass the hands left to the edge of the rib cage on your left, then downward to the corner of the pelvis on the left, then across the pubic bone moving to the right to the corner of the pelvis, then upward to the corner of the rib cage on the right and finish the cycle by returning the hands to the center below the breastbone. Repeat this as many times as you wish. If your aim is to improve bowel function or resolve gastrointestinal problems, do this often.

Now as a variation turn your bunched, extended fingers and press inward under the sternum, bend forward gently and press in and under the bone directing penetrating pressure toward the colon. Sit back up. Shift the position of the fingers to the point half way to the left corner of the rib cage. Press in, bend over, penetrate in and under the ribs. Return to the upright position. Continue to the point at the corner of the rib cage on the left and repeat. Repeat this process at each of the twelve points noted on the illustration.



Look for areas of pain, tightness or lumpiness. This type of massage is a particularly healing method because it can remove tension and knots that have accumulated in the abdominal organs or in the energy system in the abdominal area. A dozen of the most important energy channels travel through this area. You may repeat this several times in a session or several times in a day. It can be done while seated and even while seated on the toilet.

Some people like to inhale as they bend forward; others like to inhale as they return to the upright position. You can choose what works best for you. Pay attention to what you are experiencing. If you genuinely relax, the benefits of this process are accelerated substantially. To finish, repeat the circular movement of passing the hands clockwise several times. Then, if you wish you can go on to the next method.

There are some who suggest that the direction of the massage should go the opposite direction for both the hands passing method and the pressure method if the individual is experiencing diarrhea. Because there are many causes for loose bowels, I have found that most people benefit from the practice following the natural direction of material in the colon. Pay attention and try different approaches to become an expert in your own practice.

Face and Eye Massage

There many energy points on the face and around the eyes. These points are associated through the energy channels to the stomach, spleen, large intestine, lungs, small intestine, heart, bladder, kidney and endocrine system. Keeping the internal organs healthy keeps the face and eyes radiant; keeping the face and eyes healthy contributes to sustaining health in the organs. These points can be treated through self-massage. The direct benefit is a healthy face and eyes, the indirect benefit is healthy organs.

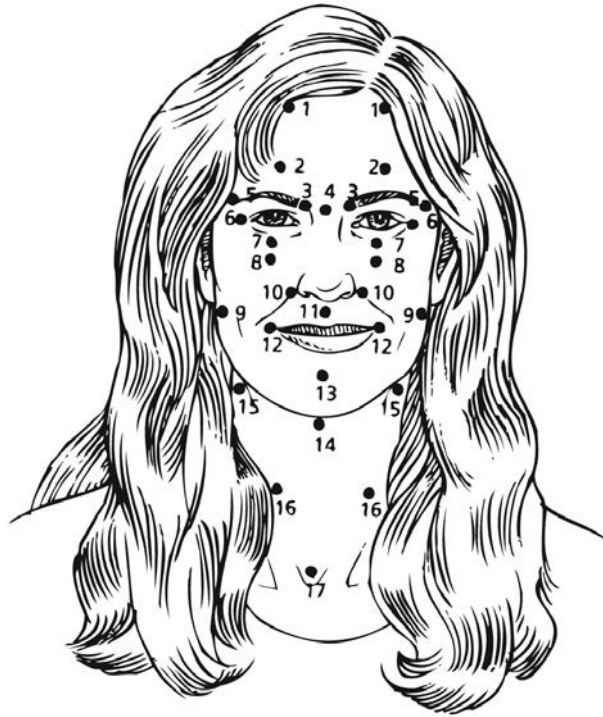
The treatment of the eyes is common in the schools in China where children take breaks to do health enhancement practices which include self massage. The massage of the eyes and face can be combined. Begin by working on the face points. You can tap the points sharply with the tip of your index or second finger. You may wish to give some gentle pressure with circular motion using two or three bunched, extended fingers. Notice that the tapping gives a bit more rousing sensation. After a session of facial massage you will feel a tingling that affects the organs as well as the facial area.

Spend a few moments on each of these areas. Feel free to add others or linger at certain points longer. All the points benefit the muscles and skin of the face. The list below will also note additional benefits according to traditional Chinese medicine.

To give additional attention to the eyes and eyesight, go back and treat the points around the eyes: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. You may tap between these points as well; for example, tap all along the eyebrow from point 3 to point 5. Then rub the hands together to produce heat. Place the palms over the eyes so that all light is blocked out. Relax deeply, exhale, feel the warmth penetrating into the eyes. Feel the heat penetrating back through the eyes to the part of the brain where sight occurs.

If you wish, move the eyes in a circle while closed; look left, up, right and down for several cycles. Then reverse: look right, up, left and down for several cycles. Then squeeze your eyes together tightly. Pay attention, you can feel fluid pressing out of the area, like water being expressed by a sponge.

Then uncover your eyes and open them with several exaggerated blinks. Look at something close. See it carefully in detail. Then look at something far away. Stay relaxed. Then look close again, then look far away. You may repeat this eye process several times. A number of people have used this practice successfully to improve their eyesight.



Face and Eye Massage Points

1. Gall Bladder Point: Forehead lines, emotional tension, headache, the liver.
2. Gall Bladder Point: Same as #1.
3. Bladder Point: Bunch lines between eyebrows, eye strain, headache, sinus.
4. Endocrine: Bunch lines between eyebrows, headache, eyestrain, pineal, pituitary.
5. Endocrine: Crow's feet at eyes, headache, eyestrain, brain.
6. Gall Bladder: Crow's feet at eyes, emotional tension, headache, eyestrain.
7. Stomach: Puffiness under eyes, dark circles, digestion, spleen.
8. Stomach: Same as #7.
9. Stomach: Firm skin, jaw tension, spleen.
10. Large intestine: Upper smile line at nose, sinus, lungs, elimination.
11. Governing Vessel: Effects the whole face, connected to brain.
12. Stomach: Smile line at mouth, digestion, spleen.
13. Conception Vessel: Effects whole face, related to life source energy.
14. Conception Vessel and Chin: Tap the whole area of the chin, affects the tone of the skin, muscle and glands of the chin, accelerates circulation of blood and lymph.
15. Endocrine: From below ear tap and pull downward, drains lymph.
16. Tapping and jiggling of throat and neck: Effects skin and muscle tone, accelerates circulation of blood and lymph.
17. Conception Vessel: Effects neck, particularly thyroid which enhances metabolism and the vital energy of the whole system.

Benefits of Self-Applied Massage

The practice of self-applied massage stimulates several physiological mechanisms that enhance our natural self-healing capability. The explanation for reflex massage generally agreed on, points to neurological impulse transmitted from the reflex point on the surface of the body to distant sites by way of the nervous system through the spine and brain.

The benefits of self-applied massage include:

- Increase of circulation of oxygen and nutrition.
- Enhanced elimination of metabolic wastes from the lymph.
- Relaxing and deepening the breath during self-massage shifts the brain chemistry and brain wave frequency.
- Pain relief.
- Stimulation of balanced organ function.

Disorders such as diabetes, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, obesity and even depression and anxiety respond to massage. Whether your focus is pain relief, metabolic rehabilitation, or you just want to feel better, self-massage is effective.

You do not even need to know your specific diagnosis to benefit from self-applied massage. Start with a general focus on the three primary reflex areas -- the hands, ears, and feet. After a general massage of the reflex areas, focus on the sorest points in each of these areas.

Remember, it is not so important to know what the sore areas represent or the cause of their soreness. Their tenderness to pressure indicates a link to dysfunction.



Chapter 5. Relaxation, Visualization and Meditation Practices

Overview of Relaxation, Visualization and Meditation Practices

Because we are generally addicted to complexity and busyness in our culture, reaching a state of authentic relaxation is a challenge. Many of us are locked into worry, hurry, overwork, and compulsive behaviors, and the mind is very difficult to quiet. Our immune system is sabotaged by stress and tension, but supercharged by deep relaxation.

Researchers have found that many diseases are caused or irritated by stress, which causes overactivity of the sympathetic nervous system and exhaustion of the adrenal glands. The opposite of the *flight or fight state*, called so by Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard University, is the *relaxation response*, which can resolve or neutralize the negative effects of stress on the body and heal disease.

Physiological mechanisms triggered by inducing relaxation are:

- Reduction of blood pressure.
- Warming of the skin surface due to the dilation of blood capillaries.
- Enhanced productivity of beneficial neurochemicals and hormones.
- A shift toward a lower frequency of brain wave activity (alpha and theta).

In deep relaxation, visualization, and meditation practice, the induction of the *relaxation response* precedes and accompanies the successful initiation of each process. Most of the great spiritual traditions of the East and West initiate deeper levels of practice by eliciting the *relaxation response*. When Dr. Herbert Benson was researching some of the effects of Qigong, he noticed that the primary effect was triggered by an initial induction of the *relaxation response*.

The Chinese call the *relaxation response*, the *Qigong state*. In ancient cultures, prayer, meditation, ritual, and contemplation were all initiated by shifting into the relaxed state. For self-care, there are

many simple but highly effective techniques for achieving deep relaxation. Deep states of consciousness may be attained by merely remaining mindful of the breath. Relaxation is really the most primary of the four self-care methods of Tai Chi Easy™ as it complements and strengthens the other practices.

Progressive Relaxation

Mentally bring your awareness to, and then consciously relax, each part of your body, progressively, from the feet all the way up to your head. Your breath should be full and relaxed. Notice that this process only takes five minutes. It is particularly easy to do in bed before sleep, on awakening or in the hospital.

- *In a comfortable position, (lying, sitting or even standing), close your eyes and take ten slow deep breaths.*
- *Bring your awareness to your right leg. Inhale deeply and lift the leg up slightly tensing the foot and leg. Tense up tighter. Exhale and let the leg drop gently. Roll the leg from side to side and relax. Inhale and repeat the same for the left leg and foot.*
- *Now bring your attention to your thighs and buttocks. Inhale, contract your buttocks, pelvic muscles and thighs. Tighten until the end of the breath and then release and exhale.*
- *Now bring your attention to your right arm. Inhale, raise and tense your right arm and make your hand into a fist. Tense up and hold. Exhale and drop the arm. Roll the right arm from side to side. Inhale and repeat with the left arm.*
- *Inhale and bring the shoulder blades together in back. Squeeze tightly and release, exhale.*
- *Inhale and bring both shoulders up to your ears. Hold them up. Exhale and let them down. Repeat three times.*
- *Inhale, and tighten the facial muscles. Scrunch up your face like you have just bitten into a lemon and squeeze tightly. Exhale and release tension.*
- *Roll the neck gently from side to side.*
- *Continue with several deep relaxed breaths to go deeper and deeper into relaxation.*

This technique is perfect for those who wish to tap the benefits of the self-applied relaxation methods but have little prior experience. In every tradition where Mind+Body self-care methods have been refined over thousands of years, the distracted mind is one of the great challenges to the practice. Even the great meditation masters call their daily system of quieting mind a “practice.”

It is not a finished product; it is a “practice.” This indicates that even the experts are constantly refining their ability to quiet the mind to benefit the body. When the mind drifts, the process stops. When you realize you are no longer engaged in the process, say to yourself, “This is a practice that I am perfecting. I forgive myself for forgetting and congratulate myself for remembering to return to the process,” then continue. If you have drifted into sleep it is especially important to understand the

healing effect of rest. Frequently, people have the attitude that needing rest means laziness. Balance in life means action and rest are in harmony. It is not unusual for people to work or play hard and then neglect rest.

If you fall asleep during meditation, call it creative napping; celebrate that you are collecting needed rest. One of the most frequent prescriptions I have made as a doctor is for sleep, napping and vacation. Eventually, your need for rest will be fulfilled and it will become easier to meditate. Take a moment to be aware of the results of this practice. You will feel refreshed and rested. If it leaves you sleepy, please understand that you probably need rest. If you are alert, you will feel the change inside of yourself.

Progressive Relaxation with Affirmation

A variation on this progressive relaxation uses visualization, affirmation and inner dialogue. This method may be done either sitting or lying down. Allow the breath to be full and relaxed. On the exhalations, deeply relax and visualize that each of the body parts are relaxing or filling up with revitalizing, healing energy. Visualize the parts that you are addressing glowing radiantly with vitality.

Silently affirm the following to yourself:

1. *Now my feet are relaxed.*
2. *Now my calves up to my knees are deeply relaxed.*
3. *Now my thighs up to my hips are completely relaxed.*
4. *Now my buttocks are relaxed.*
5. *Now my hands are relaxed.*
6. *Now my arms are relaxed.*
7. *Now my pelvis is relaxed.*
8. *Now my abdomen is relaxed.*
9. *Now my chest is relaxed.*
10. *Now my back is relaxed.*
11. *Now my shoulders are relaxed.*
12. *Now my neck is fully relaxed.*
13. *Now my face and jaw are very relaxed.*
14. *Now my eyes are completely relaxed.*
15. *Now my temples and forehead are relaxed.*
16. *Now my scalp is relaxed.*
17. *Now my head is totally relaxed.*

Marrow Washing Visualization

In the relaxation and meditation traditions of the ancient cultures, regulation of mind goes beyond simply focusing on the body. In the Native American tradition nature is the source of all life and healing. In the Christian tradition, contemplation is focused on divine grace and the light of spirit.

In both Qigong and Yoga, one purposefully draws healing energy and the light of spirit from nature and the universe. Rather than limiting attention to specific body parts, (as in arms legs, organs, etc.), as in the previous practices, creative attention is focused on the visualization of the function of vital resources (vitality, energy), passageways and gateways. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, it is conceived that energy can be gathered from water, mountains, trees and the universe through nearly 1,000 acupuncture energy gates (points) distributed over the body's surface.

The energy of Heaven, called Yang, is naturally drawn downward toward the Earth. The energy of the Earth, called Yin, is naturally drawn upward toward the Heaven. These two rich universal resources are considered to be the essential energies of life and health as they circulate and interact in the human body. At the surface of the Earth where these energies mix, is the realm of biological life, the biosphere. The Chinese, as well as the Indians who live south of the Himalayan Mountains, believe that one can intentionally draw upon the energy of the Heaven, the Earth and the biosphere to enhance and harmonize one's own personal energy.

Start by getting comfortable. Either stand in the Opening Posture, sit or lie down. Allow your breath to be deep, slow and relaxed. With each inhalation, you are gathering the resource of oxygen with the breath. At the same time, imagine, visualize or feel, that you are also gathering in vitality (Qi) from the Heaven, the Earth and the biosphere through thousands of energy gateways. The Chinese believe that this absorption of energy is always happening to sustain life. However, in this practice you are multiplying the extent to which it is occurring because you have focused your attention and intention regarding self-healing. Ancient cultures and religious traditions believe that the life energies react to our thoughts and intentions. Current research from numerous disciplines, particularly on neurotransmitters or "information substances," suggests that this is true.

On your exhalation, allow yourself to slip deeper and deeper into relaxation. Visualize (if it is easy to) the internal healing resources circulating throughout the system in the energy channels. You may feel waves of warmth, tingling or a flowing feeling. It is not necessary to know the channel pathways or directions. This all happens automatically. Just celebrate the flow of vitality throughout your system. Visualize it going to the organs. You can place your hands on the liver, spleen, kidneys, heart and umbilical area as was described in the massage section. You may feel energy or warmth passing from your hands into the organs.

On your inhalations, you are gathering healing resources. On your exhalations affirm the power of those resources circulating within to increase health and vitality. The internal circulation of vitality is always occurring naturally, as is the accumulation of vital force through the breath and the energy gates. Howev-

er, when you turn your attention to fostering the natural process of circulation, there is an increase. Focus your attention carefully inside and you will feel the internal medicine working.

Continue this practice for five to fifteen minutes. Inhale, and gather healing resources through breath and through the thousands of acupuncture gates. Exhale, and release the breath and circulate healing resources internally. Over the period of practice, you will feel deeply relaxed. Use your mind intention to direct the flow of the internal healing forces to the organs or body parts that need healing the most.

Mindfulness

This practice, called mindfulness or insight meditation, is very simple to describe. There is only one focus, sustain a single point of awareness. This focus is usually the sensation of the breath as it passes into and out of the nose. Stand, sit or lie down comfortably and begin to notice the breath. There is a cool sensation as fresh air enters the nose and a warm sensation as the exhalation exits from the nose. When mind is attracted to a passing thought, simply return your focus to the breath.

The goal of this practice is to free the body from the effects of busy mind. When a thought takes your attention from the single point of focus, you are still quiet and somewhat relaxed, but the body is affected by busyness of mind. When you are able to sustain the single awareness of the breath, even just for a few moments, the body is freed completely from the effect of mind busyness. The healer within turns to the activity of producing its potent medicines.

It is beneficial for the body to simply stop doing even if mind has some involvement. In Progressive Relaxation and Marrow Washing Visualization, one stops, relaxes and purposefully shifts the focus to relaxing certain parts or gathering and directing healing resources. This method, however, is particularly effective because all but one focus is completely suspended. You will discover that mind is easily pulled into the thought stream. If nothing else, this practice will teach you how really busy mind is. With compassion and forgiveness for yourself, patiently return to the sensation of the breath. Over time, you will gain greater and greater skill in dismissing thoughts for a few moments a day.

There are several variations of the process of sustaining a single focus. When you enter the relaxed state with the eyes closed, there are two sensations that you may become aware of. Visually, you may become aware of light or color. You may become conscious of a whispering sound. Either one of these can become a single focus for meditation. There are elaborate traditions of light and sound meditation, however, in the mindfulness and insight context, the process is very simple to state.

Turn your attention to that light or color that appears in your visual awareness. Simply note it, celebrate it and enjoy it. When thought enters notice that the light disperses or arranges into thought images. Notice that when you return to the light, the thought disperses. Attending to the thought and attending to the light are mutually exclusive. It is impossible to do both. Notice what happens to

the light when you shift your attention from the eyes themselves as the source of seeing to the place in your brain where vision happens.

Similarly, to use the sound as your focus, first find the sound. Attend to the sound only and all thoughts will disappear. In many traditions, this sound is thought to be the link to the essential activity of the universe. In practical terms, it is the sound of your life process, flow of fluids, transmission of nerve impulses and the biological process.

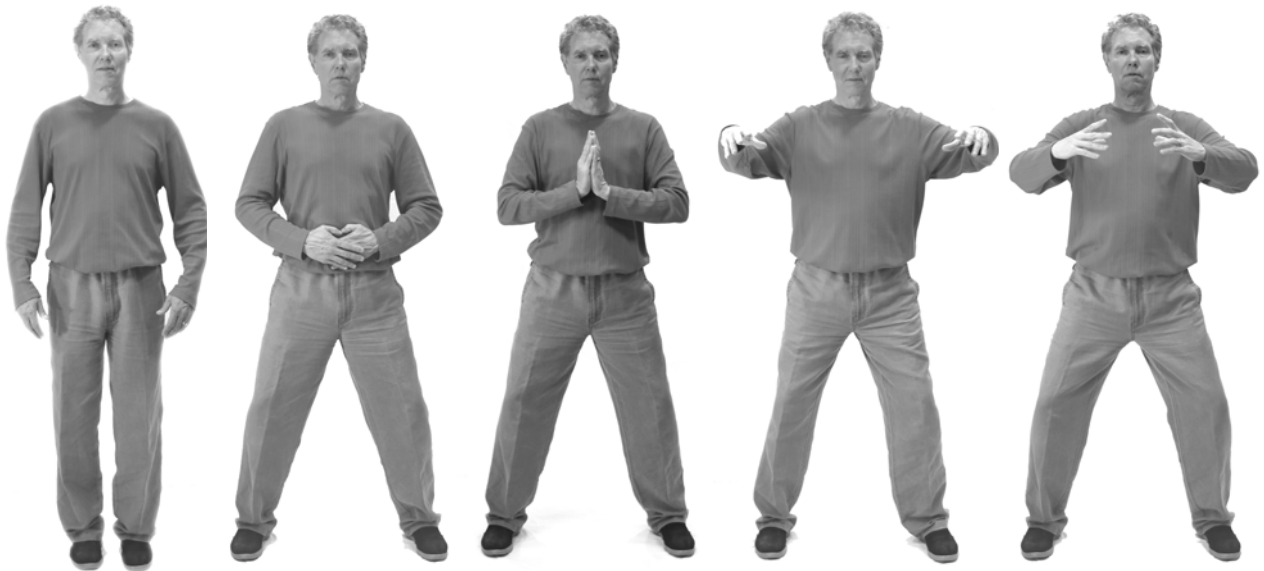
Find the sound, usually a hum or whoosh; it is subtle. Notice that when busyness of mind sets in, the sound disappears. When you return to the sound, the thoughts disappear. Each of these, breath, sound or light, are links to awakening the healer within. Mindfulness and insight are not just powerful healing tools but they will lead you to self discovery and personal insight.

Standing Meditation

There are numerous Qi cultivation practices that help to attune your awareness so that you can discover and access the subtle energy of the Qi. One of the most ancient is Standing Meditation, a foundation method for personal Qi cultivation and accessing the mind-body-spirit promises of Qi. Many such methods are called *Yi Quan*, which means “mind skill” or “mind boxing,” as you must box with the mind to get it to quiet. Standing Meditation benefits your posture and balance, increases inner body awareness, and builds stamina. While outwardly there is no movement, inwardly the deep relaxation of the *Qigong state* works numerous physiological benefits.

Do not try to do anything during this practice. Just notice what you feel in your body without creating thoughts or judgements. If you start to feel uncomfortable, focus on your area of discomfort and adjust your posture, moving gently. Be aware of your attitude toward your practice and your body, and treat your body with lovingkindness. Build your endurance gradually. Participants who suffer from painful joints or cannot stand, can practice sitting down.

Begin with Aligning your body in the Preliminary posture, followed by the Opening or perform that Standing Meditation at the conclusion of your Tai Chi Easy™ practice. There are a variety of traditional postures suitable for Standing Meditation practice. See a few of the possibilities for Standing Meditation with the illustrations on the next page.



Some Variations of Standing Meditation

Benefits of Relaxation, Visualization and Meditation Practices

Relaxation triggers dozens of positive physiological mechanisms. The neurotransmitters, information molecules produced during deep relaxation, are powerful components of the medicine we produce within our bodies. It reduces pressure within the circulatory system by expanding the size of the capillaries, which prevents stroke, relieves heart pain, and reduces the risk of circulatory problems. This increases the surface area of the blood vessels, allowing for more effective delivery of blood, rich in oxygen and nutrition, into the tissues, organs, and glands.

The immune system, which is sabotaged by stress and tension, is supercharged by deep relaxation, because the relaxed state releases information molecules that attach to the immune cells and tell them how to operate. Even diseases such as cancer, heart disease, metabolic disease, obesity, anxiety, and depression are improved with relaxation practice. All Tai Chi Easy™ practices and tools -- gentle movement, massage, and breath practice -- are all enhanced by relaxation.

The beauty of these methods is their simplicity. They allow the mind to have a focus. If the attention wanders off the process, just gently and patiently return your focus to the practice. Our goal is not enlightenment but healing, vitality enhancement, and inner peace.

Notes:



Chapter 6. Make A Difference in Ten Minutes A Day

The Momentary Ease Methods

One of the most important aspects of health promotion is to enter a relaxed state, frequently throughout your day. Both science and religion confirm the value of being able to return to a state of relaxation often, even in the face of stress. You will discover, as you progress in your exploration that these Momentary Ease Methods make it possible to reestablish internal peace and self-healing in as little as a moment's time.

Science has found that, in the state of relaxation the body chemistry shifts into a state that is automatically more healthful than the state of tension. Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) and all varieties of Mind+Body medicine are founded on remembering to seek the relaxation state. An array of powerful information molecules called neurotransmitters are produced in this state and the immune system is triggered to an accelerated level of activity.

Spiritual practices of every sacred tradition are based on quiet contemplation, prayer and faith. All of these are accomplished in a state of relaxation, or they help to create a state of relaxation. There is something reassuring about knowing that both the light of science and the traditions of faith affirm the value of consistently reaching toward a state of relaxation.

Use the Momentary Ease Methods to reclaim your connection with inner strength and intuitive knowing. Two elements work together through the Momentary Ease Methods. The first is simply, relax. However, it is more effective to link relaxation to the second: a reason to relax or an attitudinal position that fosters relaxation. Relaxation is enabled when faith and surrender are present.

One of the ancient Qigong (Chi Kung) methods from China is roughly translated as *Gathering and Cultivating Universal Energies to Produce a Heavenly Medicine*. Literally it translates as *Circulating Prenatal Universal in the Energy Channel*. The practices are based on a *Secret Four Word Treasure of Success* from the ancient Taoist (Daoist) tradition.

The four words are:

Relaxed
Tranquil
Fearless
Carefree

The explanation of the *Secret* formula for success is given using the four words. “Practice the method until the body is relaxed and mind is tranquil. To attain this state, call upon the inner wisdom that allows you to be fearless and carefree.” The first two words in the formula suggest the necessary physical state. The second two, fearless and carefree, suggest the complementary attitudinal and emotional position. Bringing the principles of the *Secret Four Word Treasure* to every moment and each encounter brings spiritual success, or as it is stated in the tradition, the practice brings “accumulation of boundless beneficence and virtue.”

Awaken Healing Resources With Ten Second Tai Chi Easy™ Formulas

How long does it take to awaken healing resources? It seems impossible but only ten seconds.

What is the first thing to do? Simply, decide to relax. This is a purposeful change of consciousness. The second thing? Take a deep breath. The third? Exhale and relax. That is it. This immediately activates the medicine within you.

You can do this practice hundreds of times throughout the day if you wish. It requires almost no effort whatsoever. Unless you close your eyes during this moment of relaxation, no one will even know that you are doing it. You can even take relaxation breaks in business meetings or in the company of other people. You can also close your eyes momentarily and relax even more deeply.

As you realize that this moment of relaxation has been beneficial, you may decide to extend it. String two or three or more of these ten second, momentary relaxations together. Five or six of these ten second relaxations only take one minute. Try it. Time yourself.

First, decide to relax. Second, take a deep breath. Third, give the internal suggestion or command “Relax.” Affirm mentally, “I am deeply relaxed” or “I am fearless and carefree.” Then, as you exhale, allow your self to drift further and further into relaxation.

By the time you reach the end of the exhalation you will be at about 10 seconds. Say to yourself, “I promise to use this wisely.” Then, return to what you were doing, but carry with you the awareness of the benefit of acting from a position or state of relaxed tranquility.

You will notice over time you that, no matter what is happening, you can relax and it will improve your response to the situation. Race car drivers, actors, basketball players and even stock market analysts will tell you that the “greats” in their field are able to relax into their work. Eventually, you will become fully aware that stress and tension never improve anything. The more you practice this Momentary Ease Method of relaxation, the more deeply you will understand how tension was sabotaging you.

You may not improve a situation by relaxing. However, it is guaranteed that you will improve your reaction to the situation. You are conserving your energy and protecting your health just by using this simple momentary self-healing method.

Feel Better Fast with Ten Minute Tai Chi Easy™ Formulas

You can transform your health in just a few minutes a day by creating effective ten minute sessions that draw from the Tai Chi Easy™ practices. These can be used throughout the day as breaks during work or as recurrent doses of self-healing for those who are unwell.

You are the best person to devise these brief sessions because you are aware of your favorite methods as well as your dislikes and limitations. You can come up with almost an infinite variety for these brief sessions. These examples will help you get started and stimulate your creativity. Feel free to innovate. A suggested home routine might be:

Any or all of this process may be done lying, sitting or standing. Begin by closing your eyes and taking 5 slow, deep, full, breaths. Exhale audibly “Ahh,” as in a Sigh of Relief.

Perform Flowing Motion 15 or 20 times. Imagine for these few moments that you have nothing to do. Rest in the motion; imagine that you are a stalk of wheat swaying in a gentle breeze on a beautiful, clear, comfortable summer day.

Inhale, interweave fingers, raise your arms above your head, palms upward and reach up toward the ceiling or sky, or feel free to do the milder original version of Reaching Upward and Stretching Outward.

Hold the breath for as long as it is comfortable and then exhale slowly through the nose as you bend forward. Honor your body's comfort zone; do not bend too far. Reach gently downward, towards the

floor, exhaling completely, wiggling the body gently. Now, slowly return toward the upright position, in rolling motion, vertebrae by vertebrae, and begin again. Repeat three or more times.

Vigorously massage both of your ears simultaneously until they feel warm, almost as if they are glowing. This also stimulates reflexes that effect your whole system, particularly the production of beneficial brain chemicals. Allow yourself to deeply relax for a few moments. Initiate a gentle smile by letting your the facial muscles and the corners of your mouth lift upward ever so slightly.

Research has demonstrated that even when you think of smiling it positively effects your brain chemistry and its connection to the immune system. Notice that you can feel this subtle shift occur. Continue with slow, relaxed breaths.

Affirm a positive internal message like: "I am grateful for the benefits that I access when I use these methods." Name a few affirmative thoughts such as:

"Every time I do these practices I strengthen my vitality."

"The most profound medicine is within me."

"My daily self-care practices bring me health, well being and peace of mind."

Acknowledge within that you will sustain the positive effect of this ten minute session. Reaffirm your willingness to use the Remembering Breath and brief, momentary relaxations frequently throughout the day, especially whenever stress is building.

Have a glass of water, juice or your favorite herbal tea to cleanse and recharge.

Ten Minute Tai Chi Easy™ Massage Intensive

Vigorously massage your hands and fingers, pinch and roll the fingertips. Do your feet and toes too, if time and the situation allow. This stimulates reflexes for all the organs and glands. Allow your breathing to be full and relaxed.

Vigorously massage both of your ears simultaneously until they feel warm, almost as if they are glowing. This also stimulates reflexes that effect your whole system, particularly the production of beneficial brain chemicals.

Massage your left shoulder with your right hand, find the sorest, most tense spot and give it a little extra attention. Gently rotate your head and neck simultaneously. Then massage your right shoulder with your left hand. Next, using both hands work on your neck, include the points along the occipital ridge at the base of the skull. Move your torso around while doing this to get the best effect. Allow your breath to be full but not urgent.

Do some massage of the abdomen and combine with the Essential Breath. On the exhalation as the abdomen contracts inward, press inward with bunched, extended fingers. Apply a penetrating, mildly rotary motion. Seek areas that seem tense or knotted and knead them gently.

Place the palm of one hand on or near the part of your body that is the most uncomfortable or the least able to do its job. Place the palm of your other hand over your second most painful or deficient part. Now, move about, stretch or wiggle around gently. The most important healing resource is within you. You are working this resource into areas where it has been unable to penetrate, like using penetrating oil to loosen a rusty bolt or screw. Imagine or feel, if you can, heat and healing energy passing from your hands into your body. Allow the breath to be full and relaxed. Add sighs of relief to enhance the effect.

Place your hands in your lap or allow them to dangle at your sides if you are standing. Notice the sensations within. This is your internal medicine working. It is a subtle sensation. Remember, if you do not feel this sensation it does not matter because the effect is still present. Have a glass of water, some fruit or vegetable juice or your favorite herbal tea to cleanse and recharge your system after the completion of your session.

Ten Minute Tai Chi Easy™ Tune Up

Any or all of this process may be done lying, sitting or standing. Do these at home, in the park, with friends, on break at work, while waiting, or when stressed.

1. Take five slow, deep, full, relaxed breaths exhale “Ahh!” like a Sigh of Relief.
2. Inhale, raise your arms above your head, interweave your fingers, turn palms upward and reach up toward the ceiling or sky. Hold the breath for as long as it is comfortable and then exhale slowly through the nose as you bend forward. Reach downward towards the floor, exhaling completely. Roll the spine up, vertebrae by vertebrae, and begin again. Repeat three or more times.
3. Rotate the body part five to ten times in each direction: ankles, knees, hips, waist, shoulders, elbows, wrists, neck. Keep the breath full, deep and relaxed.
4. Vigorously massage your hands and fingers; pinch and roll the tips of the fingers. Do your feet and toes too, at home, at the beach or anywhere. This stimulates reflexes for all organs and glands. Continue to take relaxed, full breaths.
5. Vigorously massage both of your ears simultaneously until they feel warm, almost as if they are glowing. This also stimulates reflexes that affect your whole system, particularly the production of beneficial brain chemicals.
6. Massage your left shoulder with your right hand and rotate your head and neck simultaneously. Then massage your right shoulder with your left hand. Next, using both hands work on your neck, include the points along the occipital ridge at the base of the skull. Rotate your torso and your head while doing this to get the best effect. Allow your breath to be continuous.
7. Massage your lower abdomen or colon area; combine with abdominal breathing. On the exhalation as the abdomen contracts inward, press inward, making a circle following the pathway of the large intestine.
8. Do a brief progressive relaxation; contract the muscles of each limb briefly and then relax it fully. Send a wave of relaxation from head to toe. Completely let go of all tensions and concerns for a moment; allow yourself inner peace.
9. Allow an inner smile by letting your the facial muscles and the corners of your mouth lift upward ever so slightly. Research has demonstrated, that even when you think of smiling it positively affects your brain and immune chemistry. Affirm a positive or loving thought.
10. Have a glass of water or your favorite herbal tea to cleanse and recharge.

Part Three



Practice Leader Resources



Chapter 7. Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Resources

The Tai Chi Easy™ System of Qigong and Tai Chi

The intention of the Tai Chi Easy™ system is to combine ancient wisdom, plus more recent findings about what supports an individual in creating healthy lifestyle changes, and in beginning and sustaining a personal self-care practice.

We know that if the process makes the individual feel tense or overwhelmed then it is neither of interest, nor sustainable. We know that complexity does not foster continuation of practice. Practices must be both familiar and diverse. This means that people become bored if the practices are always the same and overwhelmed if they are always different.

So, in developing the practices for the Tai Chi Easy™ System we looked at the thousands and thousands of practices, methods and systems to find the most applicable menu of practices. This allows for the whole menu to be large enough to be interesting but not so large that it is overwhelming. The overall menu of available practice methods is divided into the four areas or baskets of practice noted above: posture and movement; breath; self-applied massage; and deep relaxation and meditation techniques. These four areas make up the totality of Qigong.

Design a Practice Session with *Baskets* of Methods

To design and implement a practice session, the Practice Leader draws from these *baskets* of methods. This keeps the Tai Chi Easy™ system easy to learn and practice. The part that keeps the practice fresh and diverse allows for every practice session to have a period for creative new material, introduction of outside material, or new things that the Practice Leader or the group has learned.

To accommodate this a practice session can have either an “A” approach or a “B” approach. These are more fully described in the Practice Leader section. An “A” practice session includes approximately 10 minutes of material from the predetermined menus from each of the four areas (movement,

breath, massage, meditation), which equals 40 minutes. That leaves 15 - 20 minutes for creative or new or traditional material. A “B” practice session includes five minutes of the four areas, equaling 20 minutes of predetermined material (familiar) and leaves 35 - 40 minutes for innovative, creative work with greater diversity.

Phases of Tai Chi Easy™ Presentation

These are the phases of presentation used in the Tai Chi Easy™ curriculum. They are methods to teach any form of Tai Chi - long, short or otherwise – and make it easy or easier.

Emphasize Easy - Emphasize the “easy” part of the Tai Chi Easy™ approach by remembering to take it easy, have fun and enjoy what you are doing. The Practice Leader models this principle for the students through spontaneous humor and a light attitude – deconstructing the hard part of Qigong and Tai Chi — lowering the bar.

Teach Qigong and Call It Tai Chi - Call all Qigong Tai Chi, being mindful that Tai Chi is not just a set of exercises but the balance of Yin and Yang, a phenomenon in the universe that reflects balance and harmony of forces in mutual and supportive opposition.

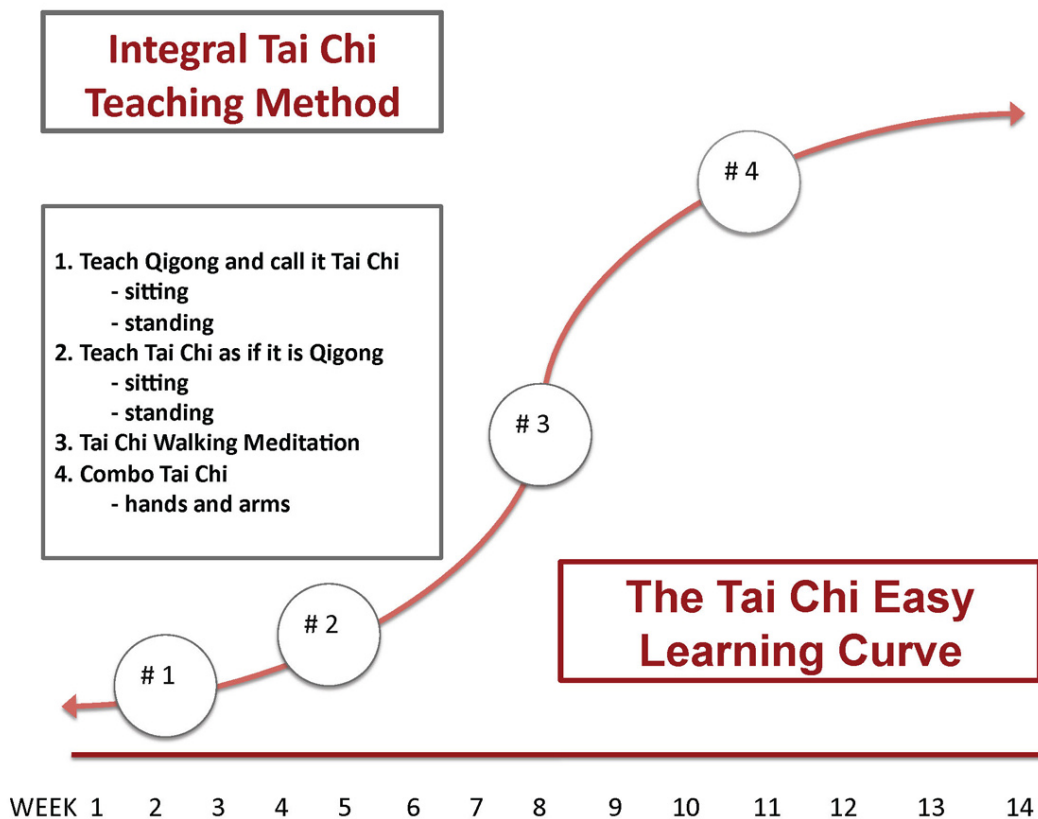
Tai Chi as Sitting Qigong - Teach Tai Chi sitting to focus primarily on the arm and head movements, relaxation and breath as a soothing and healing Qigong method.

Tai Chi as Standing Qigong - Teach upper body Tai Chi standing to focus on being rooted and in alignment while moving the upper body: weight shift, torso rotation and arm movements arising from the center.

Tai Chi Walking Qigong - Teach Tai Chi Walking as a Qigong walking method without emphasis on particular Tai Chi arm movements, to feel alignment and natural movement of torso in the movement and the natural tendency of the arms to be moved by the center with stepping.

Teach Tai Chi Walking In Place – Tai Chi movements done in place (especially Harmonizing Yin and Yang and Brush Knee, Send Qi) in place, lifting the unweighted foot, to practice weight shifting and coordinating arm and torso movement.

Integrate Whole Body Tai Chi - Teach Tai Chi upper and lower body with coordinated walking to fully integrate upper, central and lower body movements.



Transitions for Suggested Tai Chi Easy™ Sequence

- ☑ 3 Intentful Corrections
- ☑ Align
- ☑ Open
- ☑ Harmonizing Yin and Yang
- ☑ Brush Knee, Send Qi
- ☑ Cut Through to Clarity
- ☑ Watch Clouds Pass
- ☑ Gathering Heaven and Earth
- ☑ Close
- ☑ Align
- ☑ 3 Intentful Corrections

CODE	{	(O	O	X	X	X)
NAMES	{	3 Intentful, Align, Open	Harmonizing Yin & Yang	Brush Knee, Send Qi	Cutting the Path to Clarity	Watching Clouds Pass	Gathering Heaven & Earth	Close, Align, 3 Intentful
DIRECTION OF MOVE	{	Ø	F	F	B	S	Ø	Ø
Ø = Centered F = Forward B = Back S = Side								

Using Creativity for Tai Chi Easy™ Modifications

While traditional Tai Chi concentrates on performing the movements correctly and doing them in the proper sequence, Tai Chi for health promotion emphasizes simple practices that can be adapted by a wide array of populations. The goal is to be in a state of restful attention, while moving the body gently, deepening the breath and clearing the mind. So, the kind of tension that could be produced by needing to get it right, is replaced with an openness to doing it almost any way that it comes out, thus mobilizing relaxation and inner healing.

As a Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader, be creative, change the order, add parts together in new ways. The keys are:

- Do the practices as best you can.
- Adapt, modify, and tailor the practices for your needs.
- Use the Three Intentful Corrections.
- Stay in your comfort zone.

Tai Chi Easy™ Modifications

Tai Chi Chair

All Tai Chi Easy™ can be modified for use in the chair. Often people will try to do things standing if the Practice Leader is standing, so consider having everyone do some of the practices sitting, to give permission to sit. When you begin to stand, urge those who need to sit, to stay seated. If you notice that people need to sit, say something general about feeling free to practice sitting or have the whole group sit down. The strongest skill of the person who provides Qigong and Tai Chi facilitation for people who need medical or therapeutic Qigong and Tai Chi or want the practices for basic wellness and health promotion is not impressive or sophisticated Tai Chi or Qigong abilities. Instead, the primary skill is to be able to be sensitive to the learner or learners and adapt the practices to their needs. Adaptive or modified practice is the essence of Qigong and Tai Chi for wellness, healing and personal empowerment.

Tai Chi Mirror

One of the easiest ways to learn Tai Chi is to work with a partner. In Tai Chi Mirror two people practice their movements, particularly the upper body movements by facing each other and mirroring each other in motion. Keep it lighthearted so that the participants feel comfortable giving each other constructive comments. It can operate as a methodology for mentoring, wherein one partner may be less oriented to the movements and therefore gain information from the more experienced partner. If the partners are at approximately the same level of experience and refinement, they can do a kind of peer coaching.

A Word About Traditional Tai Chi

Everything that we learn and do in Tai Chi Easy™ is completely consistent with the traditional long form (108 movements) and the traditional short form (24 - 56 movements). “Purists” believe that traditional Tai Chi will be tainted by the process of teaching modified forms. This is not true. Many more people are able to access Tai Chi and Qigong, and therefore reap the benefits. This builds wider interest in the health cultivation arts and causes many more people to become interested in learning the exquisitely beautiful longer forms.

Because Tai Chi Easy™ focuses on making the form easy but remains true to the principles, it is a step or stage on the pathway to learning traditional Tai Chi. Everyone who teaches or learns Tai Chi Easy™ is heartily encouraged to learn the traditional forms as a way of deepening their cultivation of health, longevity and inner peace.

Easing into the Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Role

In China, the leaders of the Tai Chi and Qigong practice groups that you see in the parks are average people. They are people like you who became interested in the health promotion possibilities of the ancient vitality enhancement practices and have personally experienced the health benefits. As Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader you can bring the powerful gift of self-care through Tai Chi Easy™ to your community at the recreation center, church, senior activities program, YMCA, hospital, etc. The sages say, “Teach what you hope to learn.” Your own practice will grow more steadily when you elect to pursue the experience of leading others.

In every ancient culture mothers and grandmothers taught these practices to the children. Mentors taught students. Neighbors exchanged family secrets. Even in modern America there are nonprofessional, community-based health experts. It is natural for peer support, mentoring and teaching to be available in a community. Serving others and sharing information is an innate quality of human nature. If you recognize the opportunity for community improvement, if you feel called or if you feel compelled, you are the perfect Practice Leader. The sages say, “In strengthening the community, sincerity and personal experience are as relevant as knowledge.”

Practice Leader or Instructor?

There is a significant difference between a Practice Leader and a fully trained, highly experienced and certified instructor. There are several national agencies that address the competencies for instructors, doctors and other professionals in the areas of Traditional Chinese Medicine and associated arts as in Qigong and Tai Chi. The National Qigong Association (NQA) has determined that the minimum standards required for an individual to become a Professional Member, i.e. instructor, teacher or therapist, is 200 hours training. The National Commission for the Certification of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) has determined that the criterion for an instructor of Qigong and Tai Chi or a Qigong Therapist is 500 hours of training. The training for the use of the Tai Chi Easy™ system is typically 25 hours.

Clearly, this falls far short of the minimum standard set by the NQA. However, there is a great need for people to access these beneficial health cultivation arts, in a wide array of contexts including clinics, hospitals, social service agencies, community centers, adult and community education schools, and churches. For this reason we have created a designation of Certified Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader. The Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader training complements existing training and collaborates with existing professional constituency. Tai Chi Easy™ requires no hands on interaction, no medical diagnostic skill, and no advanced Qigong or Tai Chi skill. Due to the immense need for people to

improve health and prevent disease, the peer Practice Leader role is perfectly safe and a huge benefit to the community.

Many who complete the Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader training will continue with further study to become an Integral Qigong Practice Leader (55-60 hour training), a Certified Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teacher (200 hours), or Advanced Qigong and Tai Chi Instructor. These are major commitments; many nurse practitioners, physical therapists, social workers, activity coordinators, teachers, faith ministry practitioners, etc., will be able to amply complement their work and serve their populations by working from the Practice Leader level. For more information, visit <http://IIQTC.org>.

A review of the levels of dissemination of Qigong and Tai Chi:

- *Enthusiastic Citizen* - We are protected by the constitution to share with others. Many citizens learn Qigong and Tai Chi and share openly with each other as peers, Qi buddies or mentors. Not a teacher or instructor.
- *Healer Within™ Practice Leader* - 12 hour training to learn and share an accessible and highly effective form of health maximization Qigong known as *Bu Zheng Qigong* (Vitality Enhancement Qigong).
- *Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader* - 25 to 30 hour training to learn and share a modified approach to Qigong and Tai Chi. Includes classic Tai Chi principles and Qigong methods from *The Healer Within*.
- *Integral Qigong™ Practice Leader* - Level 1 of the Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teacher Training (55-60 hours), conducts community practice sessions as a part of the internship for the full training. Not a teacher or instructor.
- *Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teacher* - Completion of Levels 1, 2 and 3 for 200 hour Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teacher certification.
- *Advanced Qigong and Tai Chi Instructor* - Completion of the 500 hour curriculum, which includes the 200 hour certification, a survey of traditional Chinese medicine, basic Western anatomy and physiology and advanced Qigong and Tai Chi training.

The Practice Leader and Practice Session Concept

The Practice Leader opens the door to Qigong and Tai Chi for many in need. The Practice Leader leverages the learner toward deeper practice and learning with more highly trained instructors and advanced instructors. The Practice Leader is not a teacher nor an instructor. Many Practice Leaders become so enthusiastic about what they are sharing that they decide to complete more extensive training to become teachers or instructors. It is most appropriate to refer to the convening of a group to practice together with the assistance of the Practice Leader, as a *practice session*. It is important to use this distinction, in relationship to the Tai Chi Easy™ Program.

The Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader's Secret

The most effective way to think of what you are doing as a Practice Leader is simply to do a set of practices that you yourself enjoy or that you know the group will enjoy, and describe what you are doing as you do it. There is absolutely no actual benefit to trying to script out what you will do and try to remember a whole presentation. Everyone will be in a deep state of relaxation and liking it. It is rare that the average participant will be watching you very closely or judging what you are doing or saying, instead, participants will be in a state of significant gratitude and engagement in implementing the practices that you are leading. The secret to facilitating wonderful practice sessions is:

Sincerely do your own practice and describe it to others as you do it.

Trust that it need not be complex or perfect; relax yourself and just have fun. Your own relaxation and sense of joy will come through for the group. Use some description, then suggest that participants feel what is happening within, focus on the present and let go of the past and future, and notice the body and the breath. Be quiet for a while; then speak some little tidbits of knowledge or wisdom that you have learned or that you are remembering as you practice. You do not have to be enlightened to know about something enlightened, so allow the wisdom that you know of to speak through you for the benefit of those that you are facilitating.

Adaptive Qigong and Tai Chi

The master key when sharing Qigong and Tai Chi is adapting and modifying time, speed, amount of discussion, level of complexity, amount of material, familiar material in relation to new material for spice and fun, level of detail, humor quotient and more. At the Practice Leader level of sharing these practices, the target and intent is much less the details, extensive knowledge base and traditional forms and much more the simple process of demonstrating easy to learn and practice methods and inspiring participants to follow along and experience the benefits.

The Familiar and the New

Much observation and many discussions with master teachers have revealed that, if the practices are always new, participants become confused. When the practices never change, participants become bored. Neither confusion nor boredom inspires individuals to practice. Therefore, the Tai Chi Easy™ System of adaptable practice is purposefully designed to accommodate both the familiar and the new. Familiarity generates security and trust. Creativity and exposure to new material inspires enthusiasm and sustained interest.

The Tai Chi Easy™ System has more than enough material to vary things without going to material outside the system. However, the practice session formats encourage the use of outside, new material from both the Practice Leader and the participants.

Time - The Practice Leader is in Charge

Because the nature of Qigong and Tai Chi triggers a sense of timelessness, it is very easy to get lost in time. This sense of timelessness is why the practices are so beneficial for healing and stress mastery. However, the Practice Leader must learn to enter the *Qigong state* and remain focused on timing the parts of the practice session and the whole session.

Using the “Baskets” of Practice Methods in the “A” or “B” Session

For those who are new to Qi cultivation practices, the “A” session is much more prescribed, so you can use the Tai Chi Easy™ methods for almost all or all the practice session. Those familiar with Qigong and Tai Chi, or who are familiar with Mind+Body fitness practice will probably want to use the “B” session.

This allows for much more open time in which you which you can draw upon practices and methods that are not included in the Tai Chi Easy™ System or invite participants to share their favorite practices. Since there is much more available material in the Tai Chi Easy™ System than is needed for a one-hour or even a one and a half hour practice session, the Practice Leader draws from the larger menu of possible practices to design a practice session. It is not necessary to design this in advance. Most Practice Leaders can spontaneously create a practice session without a lesson plan.

“A” Session

Draw from the baskets of practice in the four component areas for 10 minutes (or so) each - 10 of movement, 10 of breath, 10 of massage, 10 of meditation. You can do these in any order that you feel works best and vary the segment lengths. This equals 40 minutes. The remaining 15 - 20 minutes are available for creative or new material.

“B” Session

Draw from the baskets of practice in the four component areas for 5 minutes (or so) each - 5 of movement, 5 of breath, 5 of massage, 5 of meditation. You can do these in any order that you feel works best and vary the segment lengths. This equals 20 minutes. The remaining 30 - 35 minutes are available for creative or new material. As with all the aspects of Tai Chi Easy™ System, determining the lengths of the segments should be easy and happen almost spontaneously.

It is typical for the movement section and the massage section to be a little longer, and the breath practice and meditation to be shorter. In adapting the segment lengths, you may find that when you are in a church setting or working with people who are more familiar with Mind+Body practice, breath and meditation will even be lengthier than movement and massage. It is vital for you as a Practice Leader, to learn to monitor the practice session's flow and timing as a part of your attentiveness to the present moment.

Tai Chi Easy™ practice sequences are constructed in such a way to minimize problems. The “A” and “B” sessions only exist as rough guidelines to help frame the approaches to the practice. We encourage you to be at ease and design your sessions in such a way that they begin and end on time and support people throughout the practice time in accessing the benefits of Tai Chi Easy™ and the *Qigong state*.

Sample Steps for “A” Session

Segment 1 - Gentle Movement 13-15 minutes	Flowing Motion
	Right and Left bending of the Spine
	Front and Back Bending of the Spine or any other Qigong and Tai Chi Easy™ practices
Segment 2 - Breath Practice 5-7 minutes	Sigh of Relief 3 repetitions
	Gathering Breath 5-7 repetitions
Segment 3 - Self-Applied Massage 14 - 16 minutes	Massaging the Hands
	Massaging the Ears
	Massaging the Left Shoulder and Right Shoulder
	Massaging Both Sides of the Neck with Extended Finger Tips
	Tracing the Acupuncture Energy Channels
Segment 4 - Practice Leader's Choice 10 - 15 minutes	Add Free, Creative Practices Here
Segment 5 - Meditation/Relaxation 4-6 minutes	Progressive Relaxation

Finish, encourage participants to practice, bring friends next time, stay and chat with others.

The scenario focuses on some of the Vitality Enhancement Methods, but could as easily focus on Tai Chi Easy™. Look for ways to support the group in creating community through social interaction. Social interaction and group support have a profound healing effect.

Sample Steps for “B” Session

Segment 1 - Gentle Movement 5 minutes	Flowing Motion
	Tai Chi - Harmonizing Yin and Yang
	Tai Chi - Brush Knee, Send Qi
Segment 2 - Breath Practice 5 minutes	Sigh of Relief 3 repetitions
	Gathering Breath 7 repetitions
Segment 3 - Self-Applied Massage 5 minutes	Massaging the Hands
	Tracing the Acupuncture Energy Channels
Segment 4 - Practice Leader's Choice 30-35 minutes	Add Free, Creative Practices Here
Segment 5 - Meditation/Relaxation 5 minutes	Mindfulness

Finish, encourage participants to practice, bring friends next time, or stay and chat with others.

This scenario also places the free, creative practice before the meditation. This is not necessarily the best way. The “B” Session is intended for Practice Leaders who have been working with the material for a while and feel more comfortable with how they may approach the use of the free, creative period. The free period may include further use of the Tai Chi Easy™ material or methods that have been learned from other teachers, books or videos, with an emphasis on “the principles,” i.e. the materials

or methods are easy to practice, and do not strain or confuse your students. In addition, invite the participants to share things that they may find enjoyable or beneficial.

Talking and Silence

Determining when and when not to speak is a fine art. It is never possible to satisfy every participant. Many people need and want instructive reminders, and everyone loves a certain amount of story telling, description of the self-healing capacity, and metaphors for the movements (moving like bamboo, feeling the sensation of clouds inside).

However, many, especially those with more experience, find that more than a little description interrupts their meditation and deepening into the practice. You will need to be attentive enough to find the middle way. Furthermore, you may have to be strong enough to take the criticism of those who wish you would speak less, so that you can continue to serve those who need guidance.

Speak loudly and enunciate clearly for everyone to hear. Occasionally ask your participants if they can hear you. If they cannot, adjust your voice volume and tempo.

What to Say to Participants

- ☑ *Description of the practice* - “Lift your heels and raise your hands, breath in.”
- ☑ *Points to attend to in present time* - “Now I am breathing, now my hands are passing my face.”
- ☑ *Anatomy and physiology* - “The gentle movement increases metabolic activity, the breath pumps the lymph and eliminates metabolic by-products from the tissue spaces.”
- ☑ *References to natural healing* - “The Chinese refined these practices for thousands of years, Yoga and Qigong trigger the naturally occurring self-healing capacity.”
- ☑ *Stories of actual people* - “One of our group feels that this practice helped her with her sleeping problem,” or “this is my favorite practice because it reminds me of watching clouds as a child.”
- ☑ *Legendary stories* - “I’ve heard that the founder of Buddhism in China developed this practice. It is said that if you do this practice fifty times a day you will be healthy until the end of your life.”
- ☑ *Inspiring thoughts* - “It is guaranteed that doing these practices is better for your health than not doing them. Notice how simple it is to do this practice.”
- ☑ *Metaphors and images* - “Imagine that you are moving through honey. Feel as if you are swaying in the wind.”
- ☑ *Principles and guidelines* - “Allow your tail to sink and your head to rise.”

- ✓ *Coaching to particular people* - “Jane, if you would be more comfortable sitting, please feel free to sit down. Several people look as if their shoulders are kind of tense. If that feels like you, relax your shoulders.”

Determining the Appropriate Practice Session Length

In most cases the timeframe for a practice session is 50 - 60 minutes. The length for each practice session will depend on time considerations of the facility that is sponsoring the session, the participants themselves, as well as the energy level of the group. If individuals are ill or low on energy, limit the meeting to an hour or less and remind participants to modify.

Also allow time for people to be on time to their next activity. For example, if your practice session is just before lunch starting at noon and your class is scheduled 11:00 am - 12:00 pm, let your students out a few minutes early, so they can stay focused and not be distracted by worrying about getting to lunch. In some cases, participants will just get up and leave when they are ready, whether you are or not. Smile and adjust your timing.

Use of Music

Give your group a choice whether to play music during their practice session. If you do play music, instrumental would be best, especially music designed for sitting meditations or more active moving meditations like Tai Chi, Qigong and Yoga.

Building and Sustaining the Learning Community

The practice session is not the practice in totality. It is the doorway to the practice, or the launching pad, the springboard, and the leverage. In China it is very common to know people who do these practices every day. Over one hundred million people practice in China's parks everyday. Outside of China there is a trend to find Qigong and Tai Chi interesting but the momentum of a massive community of people doing it is still to come. There are a number of strategies that can be used to move towards a situation where the practices are building themselves more sufficiently into the fabric of the community or the culture.

Encouraging Daily Practice

The highest goal is to support participants in accessing the insight: “This is so good that I will do it every day.” Get those who practice more often to give testimonials. Tell stories about the way it is in China with every park full in the morning with practitioners.

Of course, it is all more believable if you, the Practice Leader, practice more frequently than the group practice session. How about every day?

Getting the Practice into Your Life

The first step to greater consistency is to learn some practices with a group. Then comes the challenge of how to take it home and incorporate into one's life. Here is how the Chinese do it; they are the experts. You put the practice first and build the rest of life around it.

The key is to “decide what you want!” If you desire vitality, healing, stress reduction, greater energy, clarity of mind, and inner peace, then you will advance toward your intentions by doing the practice daily. In any case, just like it is better to do it wrong than not at all. It is also better to do it some than not at all. So, every day that you practice is a victory. If that day is occasionally rather than daily, it is better than not doing some practice at all.

Networking and Social Healing

In China, there is an aspect of the use of Qigong that is gaining tremendous interest called social healing. The scientific research on support groups and social interaction in the Western world is also very compelling. In China, practice groups often retreat to a teahouse after the practice to further cultivate healing and inner resolve. For people with cancer, this is called Social Oncology. For those recovering from or preventing heart attacks it is called Social Cardiology.

The group practice session is a powerful form of social healing and triggers the benefits of Qigong plus the benefits of social interaction. Invite people to come early and help set up. Consider having some sharing as the group practice is ending to hear what people are feeling and allow for announcements that build community. Also consider having some tea available so that people can linger and discuss the practice, their lives, their challenges and receive feedback from others.

Peer Practice Support - Buddy, Mentor

There are a number of ways to help participants to modify their lifestyle to support daily or frequent practice. Your encouragement is key of course. Buddy peer support and mentor peer support can increase the possibility that participants will increase their personal practice. In buddy peer support, two people who are able to get together outside of the class do so. This can be useful by phone as accountability, but getting together to practice is better.

Mentor peer support is someone who is more advanced, but not an expert; he or she has simply been at it longer. It is critical to keep this simple and easy. Do everything you can to play down expertise

and focus on playfulness and lightheartedness. Imagine a large group of Qigong practitioners who each take a new practitioner under their wing. Won't that person then feel compelled to help someone else along? Is this not what the best of the human condition is about, helping each other along the road of life?

Special Events to Motivate the Group

Special events can help to inspire the group. Local Qigong and Tai Chi professionals will love to come to share their practices. You can also bring videos to show the group. Remember that the interest in new things is always balanced by the need for familiar practices. If you personally get all fired up about a new form or a new teacher that you have met, it may not in any way mean that everyone in your group will be happy that you have “gone off” onto something unfamiliar and possibly quite confusing to them.

Library

You may want to collect a library of books on Qigong and Tai Chi, that people can borrow to study the principles and the physiological benefits of Qi cultivation, and the philosophical background and principles of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

What Is Your Learning Style?

Remember the game called Simon Says from your childhood? If Simon said to touch your toes, you touched your toes. If Simon said spin around clockwise with your arms outstretched, you turned around clockwise with your arms outstretched. Learning Tai Chi and Qigong is sophisticated Simon Says. Simon, the Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Says do *Watching Clouds Pass* or *Flowing Motion*. Students try to follow along dutifully — with varying degrees of success, until they have acquired the muscle memory to perform the sequence. How can you help your students in the first phase of learning — following along, and then how can you assist in their transition to the level of mastery required for self-initiated practice?

Learning Styles, an important insight of both ancient master teachers and contemporary learning theorists, is a powerful key. It is important to recognize that not everyone learns at the same speed or in the same manner. Recognizing the varying learning styles of your students will help you tailor your communication to the class, particularly if you are communicating difficult ideas or gestures. *Your first step is to identify your own learning style.* Typically, your method of imparting knowledge to your classes will tend to feature the style of learning you are most comfortable with. This can be a challenge to your students, particularly if you are personally biased to a specific style. You may be unknowingly forcing some of your students to learn from outside of their own natural learning comfort zone. This can sometimes lead students to seek another teacher or Practice Leader.

Visual Learners learn through seeing and need to see the Practice Leader's body language and facial expression to fully grasp the content of a lesson. A visual learner prefers to be in the front of the training space to avoid obstructions (e.g. other people) and thinks in pictures, and may be assisted with diagrams, handouts, videos or illustrated books to aid learning.

Auditory Learners learn through lectures, discussions and talking things over. Don't give a handout to an auditory learner unless you refer to it to give it life or give students an opportunity for interaction and discussion with others.

Tactile or Kinesthetic Learners learn through moving, doing, and touching. These individuals learn best with an experiential approach. For example if a student's hands, feet, head or spine are not in the preferred position, you will best assist a tactile or kinesthetic learner by providing actual physical and tactile cues so that he or she can experience the preferred posture.

A Qigong or Tai Chi practice session that accommodates some of each of these three major learning styles for ongoing and new students will aid retention of information for the learners, as well as the retention of your student body and your success in the profession.

Leading By Example

If you review the reasons why you started a Qi cultivation practice, those reasons may have included a desire to manage your stress or an interest you could not quite explain rationally, other than a deep internal call. After years of training, when you begin helping others to begin the Qigong and Tai Chi journey, how can you impart how valuable training in Qi cultivation can be to their personal growth?

First, as a Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader, realize that you are aligned with an ancient history and lineage of practitioners and master teachers. Regardless of the family style of Tai Chi that you have studied, Yang, Chen, Wu, or Sun you are keeping Tai Chi alive by sharing it others. If you are a practitioner of Qigong, even of a contemporary form, you are perpetuating a rich heritage of spiritual self-reliance, inner peace, and healthy living.

When you make the personal commitment to Qigong and Tai Chi as a way of life, you lead your neighbors, family and coworkers by your example. Not only does this mean a daily practice of Qigong or Tai Chi, but also a dedication to professional competence and integrity by continuing study of the theoretical and practical applications of the style of Qigong or Tai Chi that you lead.

As a Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader, and in the future as a teacher, an integral part of your professional responsibility is to promote your students' physical, mental, and spiritual well being. A key element is to abstain from giving medical advice, or advice that could be interpreted as such, unless you have the necessary medical qualifications.

The practices of Tai Chi and Qigong have incredible health promises for regular practice, and there are numerous accounts of miracles. However do not exploit the trust and potential dependency of your students; encourage them to seek needed assistance for physiological or psychological issues.

Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader Profile

- ☒ Confidence
- ☒ Knowledge
- ☒ Presentation skill, and Qigong and/or Tai Chi skill
- ☒ Enthusiasm
- ☒ Punctuality
- ☒ Professionalism
- ☒ Qi
- ☒ Balance of body, mind and spirit

Qi for Thought

- ☒ What qualities do you feel a great Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader should have?
- ☒ What are the strengths that you will bring to being a Tai Chi Easy™ Practice Leader?

Tai Chi Easy™ Resource List

Qigong and Tai Chi Websites

Tai Chi Easy™

<http://taichieasy.org>

Tai Chi Easy™ is a carefully developed approach to learning Tai Chi, suitable for individuals of all ages and health conditions, to access and enjoy the physiological and psychological health benefits of "evidence based" mind-body practice. As a practice of “meditation in motion,” the slow movements and mindset of Tai Chi can be used to manage stress levels by creating a sense of choice and a heightened awareness of our capacities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action in every movement.

Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC)

<http://iiqtc.org>

The IIQTC, under the direction of Dr. Roger Jahnke, offers Qigong and Tai Chi exercise for active aging; research and dissemination of the health and social benefits of Mind-Body Practice in collaboration with universities, major medical and health care agencies; Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teacher Trainings; public workshops and retreats at holistic learning centers, spas and retreat centers; breakout sessions, workshops and keynotes for wellness conferences; consulting to hospital systems, universities, and social agencies on integrative and complementary medicine; and learning vacations in Asia for cultural exchange and intensive study in Qigong and Tai Chi.

Feel the Qi

<http://feeltheqi.com>

FeeltheQi.com is the website of Dr. Roger Jahnke, author of *The Healer Within* and *The Healing Promise of Qi*. Find out about his upcoming workshops, retreats and teacher training programs, read articles and resources to inspire your practice, and receive updates on Tai Chi and Qigong research, travel to China, secrets of Chinese medicine, offers for downloads, and announcements of educational webinars.

Healer Within Community

<http://healerwithin.com>

Website for the groundbreaking book, *The Healer Within: Using Traditional Chinese Techniques To Release Your Body's Own Medicine*, which fosters grassroots community practice of Qigong

Tai Chi Easy™ Resource List

Qigong and Tai Chi Websites

The Healer Within Foundation

<http://healerwithinfoundation.org>

The Healer Within Foundation, founded in 2003, is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Santa Barbara, California. The Healer Within Foundation's *TaiChiEasy*™ "evidence based" programs empower people using medically proven self-care practices that effectively lower risk for preventable chronic diseases, improve sleep problems, manage pain, speed rehabilitation, reduce depression and anxiety, assist in recovery from addiction, and more.

Qigong and Tai Chi Organizations and Associations

American Tai Chi and Qigong Association (ATCQA)

<http://www.americantaichi.org>

A national nonprofit organization in the United States promoting Tai Chi and Qigong in any style, lineage, or application. for health, fitness and wellness.

National Qigong (Chi Kung) Association - USA (NQA)

<http://www.nqa.org>

A nonprofit organization in the United States for all schools and styles of Qigong and Tai Chi, membership includes practitioners of Tai Chi and Qigong from all occupations as well as instructors. Internet site includes a directory of members and instructors.

Qigong Institute

<http://www.qigonginstitute.org>

The Qigong Institute is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the scientific understanding of the basis of Qigong through research and education. Since 1984 it has been a clearing-house for related news and scientific facts to aid researchers, writers, Qigong practitioners and teachers, members of the Western medical community, and the members of the general public who are interested in learning more about Qigong and Tai Chi. Website lists Qigong teachers and therapists.

Tai Chi Easy™ Resource List

Complementary Medicine and Asian Medicine

American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAOM)

<http://www.aaaomonline.org>

National organization for professional practice of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. Website has a Find An Acupuncturist page.

American Organization for the Bodywork Therapies of Asia (AOBTA)

<http://aobta.org>

National nonprofit professional membership association of the practitioners, instructors, schools, and programs of the various Asian Bodywork Therapy (ABT) forms. The AOTBA website has a professional directory.

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health

<https://nccih.nih.gov>

The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) is the U.S. Government's lead agency for scientific research on the diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not generally considered part of conventional medicine.

National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM)

<http://www.nccaom.org>

National nonprofit organization that validates entry-level competency in the practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine through professional certification. Website features a Find A Practitioner search engine.

Tai Chi Easy™ Resource List

Books, Journals, and Magazines

The Empty Vessel, The Journal of Daoist Philosophy and Practice

<http://www.abodetao.com>

The Empty Vessel, the Journal of Daoist Philosophy and Practice, published quarterly since 1993, covers Chinese medicine, Daoist (Taoist) studies, Qigong, Tai Chi, meditation, herbs, martial arts, internal alchemy practice, I Ching, Tao Te Ching, feng shui and other aspects of Eastern philosophy.

Qi: The Journal of Traditional Eastern Health and Fitness

<http://www.qi-journal.com>

Explores Chinese arts focused on health and fitness including Qigong and Tai Chi, with an online catalog of books and videos, professional listings, event calendar and articles.

Singing Dragon

<http://www.singingdragon.com/>

Authoritative books on complementary and alternative health, Tai Chi, Qigong and ancient wisdom traditions for health, well-being, and professional and personal development.

Supreme Chi Living

<http://www.americantaichi.net/>

Online journal by the American Tai Chi and Qigong Association.

Yang-Sheng: Nurturing Life

<http://yang-sheng.com>

E-magazine and a network for all healthcare professionals of preventive medicine and practitioners of mind-body exercise.

Tai Chi Easy™ Resource List

Retreats and Training Centers That Offer Qigong and Tai Chi Training

1440 Multiversity, Scotts Valley, California

<http://1440.org>

1440 Multiversity offers a wide variety of wellness, professional development, healing arts, and personal growth programming at its 75-acre campus located in the redwoods near Santa Cruz, CA

Art of Living Retreat Center, Boone, North Carolina

<http://aolrc.org>

Set amidst 380 acres of pristine forest high up in the Blue Ridge Mountains the Art of Living Retreat Center is the perfect place to begin your journey to wellness. In addition to the inspiring surroundings, the Art of Living has America's #1 Ayurveda Spa on site.

Esalen Institute, Big Sur, California

<http://www.esalen.org>

An alternative educational center devoted to the exploration of the "human potential." Esalen is noted for its blend of East/West philosophies, its experiential workshops, and its breathtaking grounds blessed with natural hot springs.

Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health, Stockbridge, Massachusetts

<http://kripalu.org>

Kripalu is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization in Berkshires of western Massachusetts, dedicated to empowering people and communities to realize their full potential through the transformative wisdom and practice of yoga.

Omega Institute for Holistic Studies, Rhinebeck, New York

<http://www.eomega.org>

The nation's largest holistic learning center offering workshops, retreats, professional trainings, wellness vacations and conferences in Rhinebeck, New York, urban centers, the Caribbean and Costa Rica.

The Open Center, New York, New York

<http://www.opencenter.org>

New York City's leading center for holistic learning and world culture.

Tai Chi Easy™ Resource List

Internet Sites of interest

Healthy.net healthy people, healthy planet — <http://www.healthy.net/qigong>

Want to Learn More About Tai Chi Easy™ and Mind-Body Practice?

Dr. Roger Jahnke
Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC)
130 South Patterson Avenue #1447
Phone (805) 617-3390
Email IIQTC@healthaction.net

IIQTC Administrator
Rhonda Richey rhonda.richey@healthaction.net

The Collaborating Partners

**For Creating and Disseminating Tai Chi Easy™ for
Health Promotion, Active Aging, and Stress Reduction**

About The Healer Within Foundation

The mission of the Healer Within Foundation is to promote personal responsibility for health and wellness through education and research in the areas of integrative medicine and self-care, resulting in disease prevention, reduced medical costs, increased productivity and creativity, and well being for individuals, communities and institutions worldwide. The Healer Within Foundation's programs empower people using "evidence based" self-care practices that effectively support disease prevention, accelerate healing, and decrease unnecessary mental and physical suffering.

About The Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC)

The Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC) is dedicated to the mission of mobilizing citizens of all ages, professions, economic and social status to accept the responsibility for personal health maintenance and maximization. The primary methodology for this initiative is to help to bring the ancient and sometimes esoteric self-care methods, associated with traditional Chinese medicine – Tai Chi and Qigong – within the reach of typical American citizens. The extent to which an optimization of access to self-care tools and information can reduce the disease and mortality load and save money is significant, and the Chinese self-care system is perfectly suited to create the desired outcomes. The IIQTC creates training programs for the public that make Qigong and Tai Chi easy, enjoyable and accessible for all populations. In addition, the Institute trains Certified Practice Leaders and Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teachers, who work in community centers, hospitals, clinics, schools, churches, social service agencies and the justice system.

About the National Council on Aging (NCOA)

NCOA is the nation's first association of organizations and professionals dedicated to promoting the dignity, self-determination, well being, and contributions of older persons. Founded in 1950, NCOA is a private, nonprofit association of some 3,500 organizations and individuals that includes senior centers, adult day service centers, area agencies on aging, employment services, congregate meal sites, faith congregations, health centers, and senior housing.

NCOA is also part of a network of more than 17,000 organizations and individuals including:

- ❖ Professionals
- ❖ Volunteers
- ❖ Service providers
- ❖ Consumer groups
- ❖ Businesses
- ❖ Government agencies
- ❖ Religious groups
- ❖ Voluntary organizations

NCOA is a national voice and powerful advocate for public policies, societal attitudes, and business practices that promote vital aging. A founding member of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, NCOA often leads campaigns to preserve funding for the Older Americans Act and other government programs that benefit seniors. It regularly does public awareness studies such as the Myths and Realities of Aging that have helped shape the attitudes of millions.

NCOA is an innovator, developing new knowledge, testing creative ideas, and translating research into effective programs and services that help community service organizations serve seniors in hundreds of communities. NCOA is an activator, turning creative ideas into programs and services that help community services organizations serve seniors in hundreds of communities. NCOA works with and supports thousands of community organizations throughout the nation that provide valuable services and programs to older people and their families.

Tai Chi Easy™ Summary of Practices

THREE INTENTFUL CORRECTIONS		
Body	Breath	Mind
Vitality Method (Bu Zheng Qigong)	Tai Chi Easy	Walking Practices
<p>Gentle Movements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flowing motion 2. Front and back bending of spine 3. Right and left spine bending. 4. Reaching up and out 5. Spontaneous Qigong <p>Self-Massage Techniques</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hands, ears, and feet 2. Shoulders and neck 3. Faces and eyes 4. Abdomen 5. Tracing the Energy Channels 6. Sending Qi to the organs <p>Breath Practices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Essential (Abdominal) Breath 2. Blithering 3. Sigh of Relief 4. Remembering Breath 5. Deep Breath and hold briefly 6. Gathering Breath 7. Xi, Xi Hu (In, In, Out) Breathing <p>Meditation Techniques</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progressive Relaxation 2. Gathering Nature's Healing Resources 3. Mindfulness and Insight 	<p>Seated in Chair (Upper Body Only)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open 2. Harmonize Yin and Yang 3. Brush Knee, Send Qi 4. Cutting the Path to Clarity 5. Embrace Tiger Transition 6. Watching Clouds Pass 7. Embrace Tiger Transition 8. Gathering Heaven and Earth 9. Close <p>Stationary or Standing (Rooting)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open (step out) 2. Harmonize Yin and Yang 3. Brush Knee, Send Qi 4. Cutting the Path to Clarity 5. Embrace Tiger Transition 6. Watching Clouds Pass 7. Embrace Tiger Transition 8. Gathering Heaven and Earth 9. Close (feet together) <p>Walking or Stepping Version</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open (step one foot out) 2. Harmonize Yin and Yang, left and right (two steps). 3. Brush Knee, Send Qi, (left and right (two steps) 4. Embrace Tiger transition (no step) 5. Cutting the Path to Clarity with backward stepping 6. Embrace Tiger transition (no step) 7. Watching Clouds Pass with side stepping, left and right 8. Embrace Tiger (no step) 9. Meditation (arms at sides or palm-to-palm in front of Dan Tian) 10. Gathering Heaven and Earth 11. Closing (feet together) 	<p>Guo Lin Walking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guo Lin Walking in place 2. Guo Lin Walking in circle 3. Guo Lin Walking in rows or straight lines <p>Tai Chi Walking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tai Chi Walking in circle (spontaneous upper body movement) 2. Tai Chi Walking in circle with some regular movement of upper body 3. Tai Chi Backwards Walking (spontaneous upper body movement) 4. Tai Chi Backwards Walking with Cutting the Path to Clarity upper body movement 5. Tai Chi side-stepping in place 6. Tai Chi side-stepping with Watching Clouds Pass upper body movement 7. Walking or stepping in circle with upper body Tai Chi Easy movements 8. Walking or stepping version in straight lines with upper body Tai Chi Easy movements 9. Walking or stepping with Tai Chi Easy upper body movements and turns <p>Spontaneous Tai Chi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spontaneous Tai Chi with Tai Chi Easy forms 2. Completely spontaneous Tai Chi

Integral Taiji (Tai Chi) Principles

This list contains the primary principles of Integral Taiji for greater insight, detail, and exploration.

Key Integral Taiji (Tai Chi) Qigong Principles

1. *Lengthen* – knees bend slightly, head rises, tail sinks
2. *Open* – fill internally with space, open body, open heart, open mind
3. *Relax* – everywhere ... fingers, eyes, shoulders, torso, mind
4. *Breathe* – take a deep breath now and then, or link the breath with the movements
5. *Mind Intent* – focus on what is happening now, focus on the center (lower Dan Tian)
6. *Taiji Pole* – attend to the Taiji Pole, the central channel between Heaven and Earth
7. *Center* – initiate movement from center, return the mind to the Dan Tian often
8. *Weight Shift* – smooth transfer initiating from the center, widen the stance to enlarge the gesture
9. *Flow* – when any part moves all parts move, all movements flow as a continuous sequence
10. ***Softness and lightness* - use only 70% effort to move muscles and allow Qi and blood to flow and circulate throughout the body.**

The perspective we seek is the integral connection between Yin and Yang energies – up/down, right/left, in/out, forward/back. The execution of the Taiji form arises from these principles. Refining the form does not occur through “learning the movements” alone. Once you know the movements, you practice expressing them, playing them like music. **Every time you do this, it is a new chance to infuse the movements with Qi through the principles.**

In fact doing the movements imperfectly and the principles well is great Taiji. It is impossible to do **any** form well without the principles. **Embodying the principles to the best of your ability is the key to practice.**

Great Taiji masters say, “The universal Taiji expresses these principles, and the practice expresses these principles into one’s body and one’s life. In this way one can cultivate a direct relationship with the origin of all of the aspects of nature and life.” Focus upon these principles in every gesture and transfer them into your life. Sustained pursuit of this perspective in your practice of Taiji movement and in your being is the essence of cultivation.

Further exploration of the principles:

1. Lengthen the body, so you get a feeling of spacious length as you move. This is the energy of the Yin, solid self reaching up toward Heaven – an antigravity gesture.
2. Sink the body downwards, so you get the feeling of solid ground supporting you as you move and the substantial body containing the energy of being. As you sink the body, sink the Qi. This is Yang descending into the vessel of the flesh – filling the substance with openness.
3. In addition to opening vertically, open in every direction to create a vastness within. For **thousands** of years, great masters have affirmed “I am in the universe; the universe is in me.” Expand to allow more of the universe to be within you. Use the arms, open from the elbow to open laterally, create space around the heart and within the HeartMind.
4. Cultivate an awareness and feeling of the center. The biomechanical center is the lower Dan Tian; the center of the eternal being is in the middle Dan Tian. “Move” from the lower center to lead the weight shifting. Feel the center as an aspect of consciousness, open, alert, care free, attentive, powerful.
5. Sustain awareness of the Taiji pole as you breathe, move, and step. It is your own personal power Heaven and Earth connection. It provides for the merging of primordial Yin and Yang within. Return kinesthetic attention to the pole physically and with your intent. Be attentive to the external aspects of the practice while sustaining an internal sense of the center line or pole.
6. Relax means to be constantly returning attention to the present where there is no cause for alarm or contrivance, to sink the body and the Qi. To reinforce relaxation, take a deep breath as frequently as is comfortable and exhale slowly through the nose. This triggers a wave of the Relaxation Response within.
7. The breath is one of the great sources of power and Qi maximization and internal coherence. Bring the attention to the breath constantly. Notice if are you linking the breath to the movement, remembering to deepen occasionally. Without forcing, create opportunities to integrate breath and movement
8. Use space as consciously as you can. This is where you express the art of Taiji that is “seen” externally. Moving through space is a part of how the body fitness aspect of the practice is implemented and it can be a part of how the inner resources are moved. A Taiji secret is in the appropriate widening of the stance which makes for more flourishing external movement. OR, when the

stance is less wide use the imagination and the breath to cause smaller movements to create great inner flow.

9. Cultivate and sustain the intention to the movements, that are learned as separate “forms” or postures to evolve toward constant flow. Understand how/where to start any gesture clearly and finish just as clearly. Remove the evidence of the starting and ending transitions with continuous flow.
10. “When one part moves, all parts move.” At any point in the practice some parts emerge as the focal aspect of the gesture. However, all the parts that are less focal, in great Taiji, are moving. While the weight shifts and the torso turns and the arm moves, the less active parts are in play — the foot adjusts, the spine lengthens, the fingers relax. Experience that every thing is moving. Everything is vibrantly alive.
11. With great respect for your body’s capacity for movement, strive to use some or all of the following techniques for focusing energy and intention and consciously relaxing as you move: have soft Tai Chi elbows that are a gentle curve and not a harsh angle; allow your eyes to focus gently; take care of your knees by always stepping into an “empty foot;” and a slightly bent knee; allow your eyes to follow your hands. **Have a feeling of energy flowing and not being stiff, overstretched or overexerted. This is the idea of using “70%” effort to make a movement, and not “efforting” when you practice.**
12. A wider “horse” stance extends movement and requires strength in the legs. Many students are not advanced enough for a wide horse stance. Cultivate your own ability while giving students permission to take care of themselves.

Handling Medical Emergencies in Your Classroom

Be Prepared: Know emergency phone numbers in facility where you are teaching, and location of first aid kit and AED. If victim is conscious, ask permission to help. Ask 1 or 2 people to stay with you; send the rest of class out of the room. **In the event of any medical emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately.**

Medical Emergency	Recognize	Do	Comments
Fainting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not respond • Breathing • Pale, clammy skin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay flat • Loosen clothing • Give some “air” • Monitor breathing • Recovery position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery position maintains airway • Should “come around” quickly
Diabetic with Low Blood Sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not come out of simple faint • Check for medical bracelet/necklace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will need IV sugar • Maintain open airway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize earlier (irritability, sleepiness, thirst, hunger, seizure) • Victim can just drink some sugar (not diet drink)
Seizure	Jerking movements of arms, legs, and body parts	<p>DURING SEIZURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the person • Cushion head • Nothing in mouth • Don’t hold down <p>AFTER SEIZURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May take a few minutes to wake • Maintain open airway • May seem confused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a person has a history of seizures and takes medication for them, they may feel they do not need to go to the hospital.
Stroke	Brain not getting enough oxygen; may appear as slurred speech, gibberish, facial droop, one side of body may go limp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain airway if unconscious or very sleepy. • Use recovery position. 	Early emergency assistance and medication may stop the progression of the stroke.
Choking	Cannot speak or breathe (usually occur when eating)	<p>IF CONSCIOUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heimlich maneuver 	Continue Heimlich until help arrives or airway is opened.
Chest Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For uncomfortable feeling in chest, think heart attack • Sweating • May have trouble breathing • Anxious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have person sit and rest quietly. • If uses nitroglycerin, take now. • Locate AED (if available) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First hour of chest pain is most important, take action right away. • Learn CPR

Dial 9-1-1 Fast

Heart attack and stroke are life-and-death emergencies—every second counts. If you see or have any of the listed symptoms, immediately call 9-1-1. Not all these signs occur in every heart attack or stroke. Sometimes they go away and return. If some occur, get help fast! Today heart attack and stroke victims can benefit from new medications and treatments unavailable to patients in years past. For example, clot-busting drugs can stop some heart attacks and strokes in progress, reducing disability and saving lives. But to be effective, these drugs must be given relatively quickly after heart attack or stroke symptoms first appear. So again, don't delay—get help right away!

Statistics

Coronary heart disease is America's No. 1 killer. Stroke is No. 3 and a leading cause of serious disability. That's why it's so important to reduce your risk factors, know the warning signs, and know how to respond quickly and properly if warning signs occur.

Heart Attack Warning Signs

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense—the “movie heart attack,” where no one doubts what's happening. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help.

Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort. This feeling often comes along with chest discomfort. But it can occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

Learn the signs, but remember this: Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, have it checked out. Minutes matter! Fast action can save lives — maybe your own. Don't wait more than 5 minutes to call 9-1-1.

Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services staff can begin treatment when they arrive—up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. Staff is also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too.

If you can't access the emergency medical services (EMS), have someone drive you to the hospital right away. If you're the one having symptoms, don't drive yourself, unless you have absolutely no other option.

Stroke Warning Signs

The following will help you to spot a stroke **F.A.S.T.**

- **Face Drooping:** Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile.
- **Arm Weakness:** Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- **Speech Difficulty:** Is speech slurred, are they unable to speak, or are they hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "the sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?
- **Time to call 9-1-1:** If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get them to the hospital immediately.

Also, check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared. It's very important to take immediate action. If given within 3 hours of the start of symptoms, a clot-busting drug can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of stroke.

Beyond F.A.S.T. – Other Stroke Symptoms You Should Know

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the leg
- Sudden confusion or trouble understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Cardiac Arrest Warning Signs

Cardiac arrest strikes immediately and without warning. Here are the signs:

- Sudden loss of responsiveness (no response to tapping on shoulders).
- No normal breathing (The victim does not take a normal breath when you tilt the head up and check for at least 5 seconds).

If these signs of cardiac arrest are present, tell someone to call 9-1-1 or your emergency response number and get an AED (if one is available) and begin CPR immediately.

If you are alone with an adult who has these signs of cardiac arrest, call 9-1-1 and get an AED (if one is available) before you begin CPR.

Use an AED as soon as it arrives.

For more information, visit the American Heart Association website:

<https://www.heart.org/en/about-us/heart-attack-and-stroke-symptoms>