

Breath of Qi

METAL ELEMENT

LUNGS & LARGE INTESTINE/GRIEF & INSPIRATION
SEASON OF AUTUMN



THE DAO OF SELF MASTERY THROUGH THE ART OF QIGONG

AUTUMN & THE METAL ELEMENT

Autumn is the season for drawing inward. The long, hot days of summer begin the yield to cooler temperatures as receding daylight gently eases us into fall.

In Chinese Medicine and Qigong, Autumn relates to the lungs, the large intestine and the element of metal.

Our lungs offer us our first breath into the external world. Contained within the breath is Qi; life sustaining sustenance that keeps your body alive and functioning.

According to Chinese Medical society, it is believed that humans contain two distinct types of Qi. There is pre-heavenly Qi/ Original Qi which derives from both your parents at the time of your conception. This Qi resides in the kidneys.

The second Qi is known as post-birth/heavenly Qi. This Qi comes from the food we eat and the air we breathe. Our solar plexus (middle dantian) is the home of our post-heavenly Qi.

Breathing is essential to life. When we inhale, our Qi descends to the kidneys. Qi is dispersed to the body's surface on the exhale, releasing waste.

Our breathing, like the functioning of our other organs is governed by the autonomic nervous system. We don't have to consciously think about it for it to happen.

Qi is lead to the extremities including the skin and hair via the breath for elimination. We can strengthen our Guardian/Wei Qi through regulating our breath, thus helping to prevent external pathogens from intruding into our body.

Our breath links our conscious mind with the autonomic nervous system. Slow, deep breathing activates rest and digest (the parasympathetic nervous system) helping to reduce our heart rate and blood pressure, inducing a calmer more harmonious state of being.

Rapid, shallow breathing typically associated with stress, trauma and fear activates the fight/flight/freeze system.

We can strengthen our lung capacity through a variety of breathing techniques, mental focus and of course, Qigong practice. With training, free divers

are able to hold their breath an average of 3-5 minutes through training.

In Chinese Medicine, the lungs are the upper source of water responsible for descending fluids and waste into the kidneys and bladder for excretion. This process may be impeded by emotional challenges such as grief.

Grief and sorrow are perhaps the most difficult emotions for humans to process. The pain of loss can be so consummately overwhelming that for a time, we may lose our way. The clouds of depression and sadness can block out the internal sun of our heart, leaving our world in utter darkness until such time as we are ready to let go.



Physically, we find ourselves collapsing forward, shoulders rounding, our heads heavy and inclined downwards. The natural impulse to retreat from the world expresses itself through our physical form.

Qigong practice can help to ease the physical load of these emotions by offering forms that elevate the chest and shoulders. This serves to infuse the lungs with fresh, vital Qi (prana) which assists in upholding the body and shoulders as well as invigorating our capacity for living. We lift the chest and lungs upward to help restore internal balance.

Metal in balance can assist us in creating good, solid boundaries. We have the ability to say no, regardless of how we may appear to another. We align with our higher self, honouring what is right and best for ourselves.

This does not imply that one lacks feeling or empathy rather, that they are able to offer these sentiments to themselves as well as others.

Metal can be cutting and rigid when out of balance leaving one overly critical and sharp. There may be a sense of self righteousness. One might be overly frugal and limited in their capacity to live life the fullest. There may be difficulty in letting go or even to be cruel.

Depression and learned helplessness are also indicators of metal out of balance. Good, healthy metal instills a sense of courage, helping us to rise to challenges rather than succumb to negative thinking.

Depression is now a global mental health crisis. Many of us do not feel fulfilled in terms of meaningful work. A significant amount of the population feel that there is a lack of meaning, passion and genuine connection in their lives.



Qigong can help to restore metal's balance through breath and intention, gently guiding us to open up to ideas and possibilities we may not otherwise have considered. The calming, rhythmic movements help to regulate and restore the nervous system, offering us space from our perceived problems and difficulties. It is within this spaciousness that new opportunities and possibilities are formed.

There is also genuine community within the setting of group practice. This can help to ease loneliness, offering a network of sincere association.

Metal in balance helps us to define healthy boundaries. There is an ability and willingness to let go of what no longer serves our highest good. Just as leaves are shed in Autumn in preparation for winter, we understand that releasing is a natural part of life.

Metal is borne of the earth as are mountains. Attributes such as dignity, strength, courage, rarity and purity can be associated with the element of metal that is harmonious and equanimous.

The Spirit of Metal is the Po. It is the corporeal soul that resides in the lungs. It is bound to the body and returns to the earth with the body at death. It represents the organic aspect of the physiological. It is important that the Po is not confused with what we refer to in Western culture as the soul. Chinese Medicine attributes an individual 'spirit' to each of the Zang (yin) organs of the body.

The element of Metal is associated with Autumn, the colour white, the direction of West, the lungs and the large intestine, pungent/spicy flavours and the corporeal soul - the Po.

The large intestine is the Fu (yang) organ of the pair. Its primary function is to extract water from the waste material of the small intestine. This refuse is then processed by the urinary bladder prior to being excreted as stool.

The large intestine is our organ for letting go. We can release the impact of our experiences through excreting what no longer serves us. We can trust that the body's wisdom will distill from this waste what is beneficial for our nourishment and growth.



In Qigong, the lower dantian is the residence of Original Qi. This area of the body must be strong and healthy in order to preserve this life force in its home. The Qi must continually circulate. Stagnation leads to all manner of illness and dis-ease on physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels.

Qigong practice will teach you how to regulate your breathing which will assist in maintaining the Qi flow in the large intestine and the lungs as well as lesson the burden of stagnation.

The way we view ourselves directly influences the way we embody what happens *through* us. Being overly harsh or self critical locks us into self defeating patterns. These can include learned helplessness and the tendency towards giving up rather than stepping back in order to gain a broader view of a situation.

Metal helps us to cut through confusion, regain confidence and release what we no longer need. We can learn to become discerning and forthright without being aggressive or cutting. Rather than being a people pleaser, we can learn how to stand up for ourselves, cultivating dignity and inner strength. We learn to create definitive boundaries without worrying about what others will think of us.

Your life force is your most vital asset. We can learn to hold ourselves in high regard, nurturing, cultivating and protecting our energy without locking others out or allowing them to walk all over us.

As a Qigong instructor, I am continually observing how negative emotion is manifesting within the body as a breathing pattern and/or physical movement/impediment. Where is the practitioner holding stress and tension? What energy do they embody? Are they able to make direct eye contact? Do they appear nervous, withdrawn or even overly cheerful?

Has there been excess stress, grief, trauma or change in the person's life? What forms may I offer that might help someone to attune to and process their pain and with greater ease and grace?

Grief honours love and that which we value most. It has the capacity to break our hearts wide open. This can be excruciating and yet, it is a profound way to summon our humanity and our deep, abiding connection to love.

Autumn teaches us to let go. As the days grow shorter, encouraging us inward, we can remember that spring will return and with it, fresh, new growth.

The heart is closely associated with the lungs. It is the fire in which metal can be forged. It is the spring sun, hope and renewal.

When feeling overwhelmed by grief, helplessness or defeat, lift your shoulders back, allow fresh vital energy into your heart and lungs. This will help to begin your healing.

NEWS AND OFFERINGS

RESTORATIVE ROOTS

A 10 WEEK, GUIDED QIGONG PRACTICE TO RECLAIM YOURSELF.

THURSDAY MORNINGS 6:30 TO 7:30AM

APRIL 23RD TO JUNE 25

Suffolk Park Hall

Bookings Essential

\$500

COME HOME

10 Week Shibashi Qigong Journey invites you to step out of stress and the rush of daily life and gently return to who you truly are. Using the graceful, accessible movements of Shibashi Qigong, this course creates a safe, supportive space to restore calm, rebuild resilience, and reconnect with your body, breath and inner stillness.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Weekly guided Shibashi sessions that progressively deepen practice. Suitable for all fitness levels.

Simple breathing, mindful movement and short guided reflections to anchor presence and reduce anxiety.

Practices you can carry into daily life, for life. A simple, restorative routine to calm the nervous system and reclaim balance.

A compassionate community and tools for cultivating a dependable "home within" that you can access anytime.

BENEFITS

Reduced stress and tension, improved energy flow and clearer focus.

Greater self-awareness, emotional regulation, an abiding sense of inner safety.

Practical habits for sustained wellbeing beyond the 10 weeks.

QIGONG & GONG FU TEA CEREMONY

White Crane Qigong has added Gong Fu Tea Ceremony to our offerings. Gong Fu Tea Ceremony is a traditional Chinese, meditative method of brewing tea that emphasises mindfulness. Short infusions are brewed using high leaf to water ratios in small teapots or cups.



This beautiful, traditional practice blends seamlessly with the fluid flow of Qigong. Combined, they offer an experience of meditative relaxation that will leave you feeling restored, grounded and deeply connected with who you truly are.

Private parties and groups welcome.

Tea Service 30 minutes.

Qigong session 50 minutes.

\$150 per person for 3 guests or more.

\$300 per person for 2 guests.

Email to book your event now:

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You'll find us on YouTube for fully guided sessions or Insta for regular Qigong bytes.

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