

In 1905, Albert Einstein in his Theory of Relativity explained “how mass and energy are equivalent.” The study of “Qi” (氣), therefore, is the study of how energy and mass work. Qigong refers to the study of how a person can cultivate (gong, 功) and channel “energy and mass.” Broadly speaking, Qigong is the study of everything universal; and it would be futile, indeed, to attempt a definition of the “universal.” In fact, Einstein remarked that although “it would be possible to describe everything scientifically, it would make no sense; it would be without meaning. It would be like describing a Beethoven symphony as a variation of wave pressures.” What I would like to do is to eschew both the abstract and the broad definitions and present Qigong from a practical, everyday perspective.



ERNEST FUKUMOTO: A LIFE OF HEALING

I heard the word Qigong for the first time in 1995. I was working as a financial planning advisor and a client, 75-year-old Richard Suzuki, told me that he received treatments for his arthritis from a Chinese Qigong Master. He also said that he took his wife for Qigong treatments to help her control high blood pressure levels. This took me by surprise. In fact, I could not believe what he was telling me. When I regained my composure, I slipped back into my role as his financial advisor and blurted out: “Richard, you have to be kidding me. I can’t sit back and watch you waste your

QIGONG, IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

retirement income on pseudo-scientific healing treatments. You’re crazy if you think that some guy who just waves his hands around can make your arthritis go away!”

Over twelve years have passed since I summarily dismissed Richard Suzuki’s belief in the healing powers of Qigong. At present, I continue to study under two Qigong masters, and my life has changed completely. Encouraged by positive results from Qigong treatments that I have administered to people, my training with my two mentors has intensified. Early in my training, both masters encouraged me to consider a life dedicated to helping people in pain. Around this time, my mother

confided that her father had also served as a kind of healer. “Why are you telling me this now?” I asked. “I am over fifty years old and you never mentioned this to me before! Why now?” She replied simply: “I didn’t think you would believe me. I figured that you would just laugh at me and tell me that I was just a foolish and deluded person.” Well, she may have been deluded, but there was no denying my connection to my grandfather. Now, perhaps because of these wonderful connections, I find myself living the life of a healer.

Throughout my life, I have always been moved to help people. I thought nothing, for example, of quitting a job to devote myself to a cause or



to commit myself to helping a friend or a relative in need. But my efforts, though passionate and enthusiastic, remained without a focus or a path. Qigong, on the other hand, provides me now with a way to explore both my affinity with the world of Qi and my passion to help others. Whether you join me for a Qigong class that I conduct once a week in Pasadena or whether you want to learn Qigong exercises that will transform the way you live, or whether you would like a simple introduction to Qigong, I invite you to walk with me on this path toward self-healing.

working with life energy

QIGONG

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QIGONG

or Gong (working with) Qi (life energy)

Qi is your life-energy force. Qi represents the most powerful ingredient or mechanism that works to help your body heal itself. Qi permeates your entire body. Every cell in your body is like a mini-battery cell filled with Qi. When people maintain, activate, and cultivate (Gong) their life energy (Qi), they initiate a process that leads to a longer and healthier life.

Gong refers to the process of learning how we can listen and sense our life-energy, Qi. Our brain is arguably the most powerful computer in existence. In order to control our Qi, we must learn how to allow this most powerful computer to work. From the subconscious level, our brain constantly communicates with our entire body. Indeed, our subconscious allows the brain to process information spontaneously, quickly, and efficiently. It does so thousands of times faster than when we “consciously” try to direct the brain to work. Our “conscious” attempts to control how our brain works, along with our desire to calculate and predict how our brain should perform, only create unnecessary stress. Instead of allowing Qi (life energy) to flow, we set up barriers and obstructions. Gong, therefore, refers to practiced techniques and skills that allow Qi to flow. Gong is the key that helps us to temper our desire to “control” how our brain communicates with our body; it is the skill that gives us the confidence not to interfere in the natural communication process. Gong helps us learn a new way of thinking and feeling and living. It is a powerful and creative technique that helps us to connect and direct our Qi in positive and regenerative ways.

This is why I like to reverse the characters (gong-qi or 氣功). I like to think about ways to cultivate (Gong, 功) the skills that allows our bio-magnetic life energy (Qi, 氣) to flow freely. To be sure, Qigong

exercises have been an important part of Chinese medicine for over 5,000 years, encouraging people to see and understand how energy and matter influence each other in dynamic ways. My role is to help you learn gentle exercises that include soft, non-impact movements that promote self-healing. I see myself as a person who can direct you toward a way of thinking and feeling that will promote patience and perseverance, that will correct gradually your normal posture, and that will lead to smoother more natural breathing patterns. The exercises are not difficult, but they cannot be rushed. Health comes from smooth, unhurried, and natural breathing and exercising.

To be a bit more precise, Qigong relies on what the Chinese refer to as Yi (意 or the power of intention). Yi stimulates effective breath training in order to harness skills that promote a powerful self-healing. By strengthening one’s Qi and properly focusing one’s Yi, a person will naturally allow the Shen (神 or “spirit”) to arise. Qigong, then, relies on the dynamic relationship between Qi, Yi, and Shen. In other words, Yi (意) is what directs the Qi (氣) in effective and beneficial ways. Without it, the Qi becomes ineffectual; but with the proper training and a full commitment to Yi, the Qi becomes a more powerful and formidable force that marshals the accumulated power of the Qi into a concentrated and intensely focused Shen (神) or “spirit.” By developing and maintaining the optimum balance between one’s Qi, Yi, and Shen, a person’s physical immune system begins to operate at maximum capacity. This, in turn, prevents the body from wasting precious energy in trying to cope with the stresses of modern life. Qigong is a way to cultivate a healthy, stress-free life. It allows the body’s immune system to concentrate on ways that will keep you healthy. But most importantly, it prevents the body from succumbing to the deadly effects of stress. Qigong literally “cultivates” the most powerful healing “energy” that resides within every one of us.



“CULTIVATING ENERGY”

Self-rejuvenation

Self-adjustment

- Strengthening
- Stimulating
- Balancing

Mental, Emotional and Physical Energies

