

Qigong Secrets

Secrets of the Ancient Energy Masters - 22 Week Home Study Course

Week Three

Good Health Is Your Birth right

Many find this hard to believe, but long term practitioners of Qigong know it to be true. Discover more....

Page 2

There is only 1 Illness

Discover what it is and how Qigong overcomes it and prevents it.

Page 3



Dealing With Disturbances during practice....

If not handled correctly can cause Qi to be scattered leaving you fearful and anxious for no good reason. Learn how to avoid this happening to you.

Page 5

The Shaolin Temple



The home of the Shaolin Qigong, Shaolin Kung Fu and Chan/Zen

Page 6

Hardcore Stress Buster!

Learn a simple, direct and effective method to manage the stress in your life.

Page 8

Summary & Homework

If you want the 4 minute tour of what is covered in lesson 3 - start here!

Page 11



Welcome!



Welcome to week 3 of the home study course.

This week we'll discover why it is natural to be healthy. For many this is hard to accept. But as Qigong practitioners we can experience this truth as our practice develops.



Stress got you in its grip? That's soon to be a thing of the past with the stress management technique in this lesson.

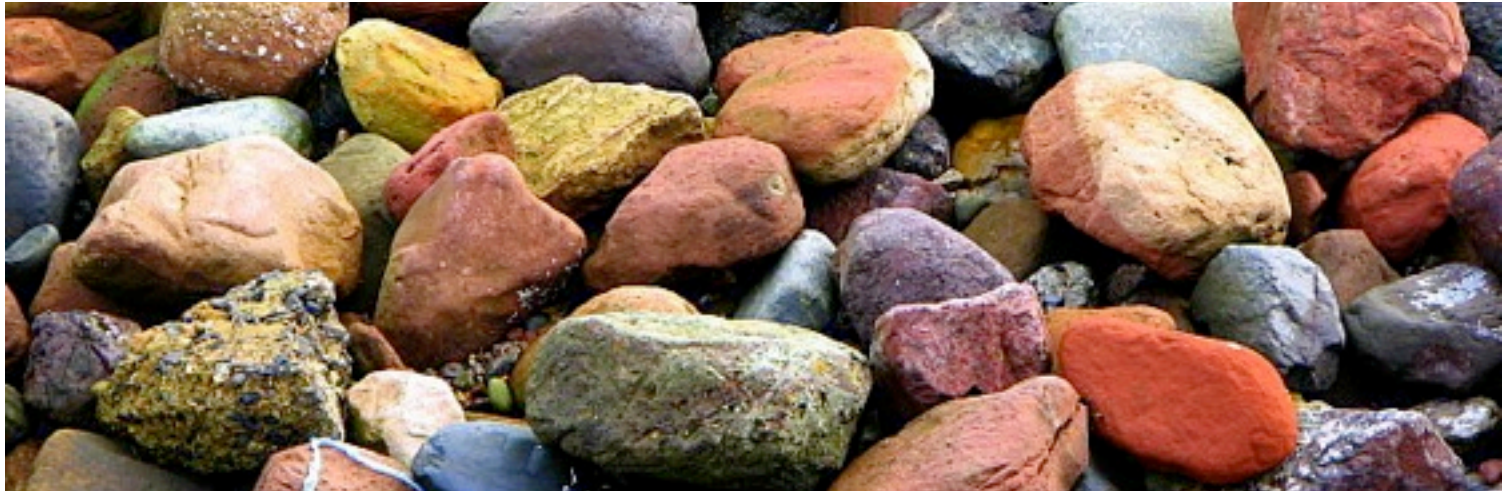
We will also discover the only illness there is (from the TCM viewpoint) and also learn that in TCM there is no such thing as an incurable illness. How's that for a different point of view?

Disturbances to your practice also gets looked at this lesson. Being able to deal with

disturbances properly and safely can prevent a number of unwanted results. Because it will happen at some point - you are going to be disturbed. I'll share with you the best way to manage it.

You will also discover the background to the famous 18 Lohan Hands Qigong set and realise why it is held in such high regard by practitioners of Qigong.

This weeks health technique focuses on teaching you how to relax deeply and thoroughly, which will help you to manage stress more effectively and at the same time allow you to develop the skill of relaxation that is vital to success with Qigong.



Good Health Is Your Birth Right

That's right. It is natural to be healthy. Put simply if your body [the cells, tissues, muscles, ligaments, tendons, organs and systems] is working as it is supposed to work you will have good health.

Illness is unnatural.

Whilst researching the material for my book Shaolin Chi Kung, I discovered the work of Dr Walter M. Bortz or Stanford University, an expert on aging. I read his book "Dare to be 100" (and I recommend you do to, as for those of us brought up with the belief that Western science is cutting edge, it presents a great scientifically backed up case for why we can live longer).

Dr Bortz states in his book:

"There is now a virtual consensus that the maximum human lifespan is around 120 years, or one million hours"

So that's your new target - 120.

Many people of course will find this hard to believe. Their experience is one of prolonged exposure to stress (with no effective way to manage it), illness, aches and pains and this has convinced them that life is an endurance.

No, life is a meaningful flow of energy as practitioners of Qigong know from their own direct experience.

It is not compulsory to become weak, infirm and put up with aches and pains as we get older. I recall the first time I saw a 70 year old Chinese man teaching a course in Chen Style Taijiquan. When he realised that people at the back couldn't see the sequence of moves he was teaching, he jumped up onto a table (the type you find in most schools) and demonstrated there. He spent the next few hours jumping up and down onto the table.

It really made me re-adjust my belief in what it means to get old.

Maybe you should too.



The ONLY Illness There Is



Last lesson we looked at Yin/Yang Theory and discovered that Yin and Yang are symbols. We also learned that something is only Yin or Yang in relationship to something else.

When we look at health Yin is used to represent our bodies *natural* ability to adjust to our constantly changing environment and the demands upon you.

Yang represents every thing that may cause illness.

We are exposed to dis-ease causing agents everyday, we overcome serious illness regularly without even being aware of it, there are millions of germs in our body and many of them deadly but we don't get sick. Why?

Because we have Yin Yang harmony our bodies adjust and overcome these agents before they can cause illness or dis-ease.

Yin Yang disharmony (illness) results when our body's natural ability to manage disease-causing agents fails. This can be caused by anything that weakens our Yin in relation to Yang, for example excessive worry, stress or long term poor lifestyle choices (drinking, smoking, drugs etc).

The other major cause of Yin Yang disharmony is when the amount of Yang is vastly increased. For example eating contaminated food or being exposed to a concentrated amount of germs.

Because good health is our birthright, Yin Yang disharmony is unnatural and temporary. This is wonderful news! In the Chinese model of medicine there is no such thing as an incurable illness, though if the illness has been left untreated for too long, and it has caused much damage, it may not be possible to restore balance fully. If we can restore Yin Yang harmony, we will restore our health.

So, from the TCM perspective, the only illness is Yin Yang disharmony - that's it. Regardless of what we may call the illness: asthma, hypertension, heart disease, depression, cancer, arthritis etc it all comes back to Yin Yang disharmony.



Then Only Illness There is (continued)

To sum up:

Yin Yang disharmony = illness

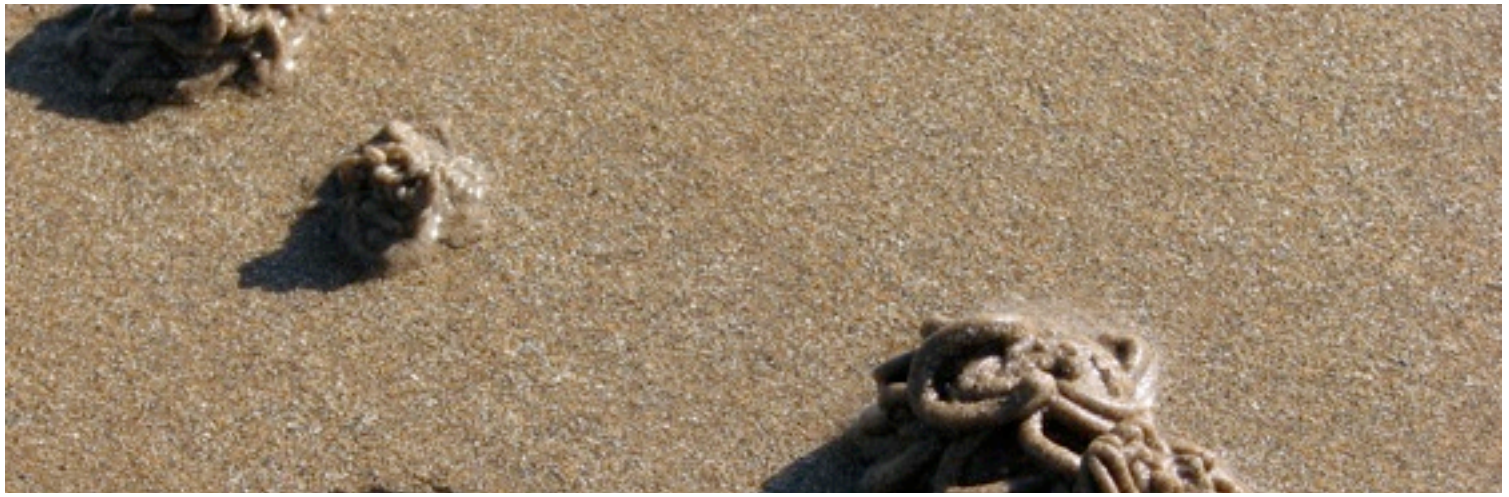
The cause of Yin Yang disharmony = disturbed Qi flow

What does energy (Qi) flow through? The meridians (the energy streams of the body)

Therefore:

Qigong restores harmonious Qi flow through the (removes blockages from)
the meridians.

The wonder of Qigong is that we don't need to know where the blockages are. We practice our Qigong, let go, let the Qi flow to areas of low energy (where the blockages are) and let the Qi do the work of promoting harmonious energy flow. Once we have smooth Qi flow we have Yin Yang harmony, we have health.



Dealing With Disturbances During Your Practice.

It's going to happen, it's just a question of when not if. You'll be doing your practice, really having a great session and the phone will ring, or there'll be a knock on the door. Or even worse you'll be outside and someone will come up and try to start a conversation with you.

So what are you going to do? You see unexpected disturbance when you are deeply relaxed meditative state of mind can cause Qi to scatter. It's not a big problem if it happens once, but if it's on going or left untreated you'll find yourself feeling anxious and scared for no reason.

There are 3 steps to take to prevent this happening to you:

1. **Be Prepared:** It may be the boy scouts motto, but it's great advice. When you start your practice gently tell yourself that if anything happens to surprise you, it cannot hurt you. If you practice in a shared house or out door area make sure your friends and family know that you are doing your practice and that you are not to be disturbed. If the phone rings they can take a message for you.
Minimise the risks by preparing before hand. Choose a place to practice or a time to practice when you are unlikely to be disturbed. A little bit of forward planning can go a long way.
2. **When It Happens:** gently and firmly keep your composure; tell yourself that your energy and your mind are intact and that everything is okay. Now take some slow, deep breaths and continue your practise when you are ready.
3. **If You Have To Stop:** if a fire alarm goes off where you are practising, or some other event occurs that means you have to stop your practise prematurely, here's what to do: bring your attention gently to your Dan Tian (the energy point just below your belly button), then rub your palms together and give yourself a facial massage.
Attend to whatever has demanded your urgent attention.
Then as quickly as you are safely able to do so relax, let go and do nothing - just let your Qi flow then finish your practice off as normal.

Interruptions, surprises and shocks are going to happen and they are nothing to worry about because you have prepared and know what to do when they occur.

Enjoy your practice!



A Brief History of the Shaolin 18 Lohan Hands



With a history going back over 5000 years it comes as no surprise to learn that there are many different styles and many different schools of Qigong.

The Qigong set of exercises that forms the core of this home study course is called the Shaolin 18 Lohan Hands. It is a very famous and prestigious set and you'll understand when I share some of it's history with you.

It's possible that you've already heard of the Shaolin Temple or Shaolin Monastery. David Carridine's character 'Caine' in the show Kung Fu was probably the first program to bring the

Shaolin Temple to the West's attention.

Then in 1982 Jet Li's film "The Shaolin Temple" became one of China's biggest block buster movies world wide and lead to the Chinese Government rebuilding the temple and turning it into one of the busiest tourist attractions in China.

But there has been no 'authentic' Shaolin arts in any of the Shaolin Temples for over 150 years, since the 2 Shaolin Temples (yes there was more than one!) in the South were burned down. Both were destroyed by the Qing army because they became centres for revolutionaries.

The Northern Shaolin Temple was restored by the present Chinese government in the 70's and turned into a tourist attraction.

1500 years ago under the Imperial patronage of Emperor Xiao Wen D, an Indian Buddhist Monk called Ba Tuo founded the Shaolin Temple in Henan province, China.

The Shaolin Temple was an imperial temple, it was where high ranking government officials and generals went once they had finished serving in office in order to spend the rest of their lives cultivating spiritually. As an imperial temple, in spite of what the films say, not any Tom, Dick or Harry could turn up and be accepted!

The Very Venerable Bodhidharma was the 28th Patriarch of Indian Buddhism. On his way back to India he stopped off near the Shaolin Temple. Finding the monks in poor health and not fit for the rigours of spiritual cultivation he taught them a set of Qigong exercises.



A Brief History of the Shaolin 18 Lohan Hands (cont)

This set was called the 18 Lohan Hands, why?

Firstly a Lohan is a term given to a highly spiritually advanced person.

When Buddha left this world as Siddhartha Gautama, 500 of his followers gathered in a grand council and for many months they reviewed the Buddha's teaching, word for word. 18 of these council members were specially honoured when Buddhism spread from India to China.

This set was called the 18 Lohan Hands to honour these 18 members of the council.

"Hands" here in the Chinese language refers to patterns or techniques.

Interestingly the 18 Lohan Hands later evolved into the 18 Lohan Fist - here the word "Fist" refers to a Kung Fu set. This set was the prototype of Shaolin Kung Fu.

The Shaolin Temple has left mankind an invaluable legacy known as: **The Three Treasures Of Shaolin**. They are:

1. Shaolin Qigong
2. Shaolin Kung Fu
3. Chan/Zen



BODHIDHARMA, WOODBLOCK PRINT BY YOSHITOSHI, 1887.



Hardcore Relaxation Method

Let's get one thing clear before we go any further. If you can't relax then you can't do Qigong. Simple as that. The ability to relax is a major requirement to success with Qigong.

You see, Qi finds it difficult to flow through a tense body. And if your body is tense, then your mind and your emotions are usually tense too.

This simple method I am about to describe to you is a great way to relax physically, which will inevitably lead you into mental and emotional relaxation as well.

This is one of the few times when simple really does mean easy. But don't make the mistake of thinking that just because it is easy, that it is of little value.

If you feel like your life is in charge of you, instead of you being in charge of your life. If stress seems to be crushing you like a block of butter in a vice (now there's an image) - this method will help you to get 'back in the saddle', to manage the stress that appears to be crushing you.

The truth is that you're never going to 'beat stress'. Stress is an essential part of life and only becomes negative when it is long term and gets out of control.

Being able to relax fully is an ability that many of us forget how to do as we get older. My 7 year old is excellent at being relaxed - but then he doesn't have to support a family! I bet if you check in with yourself at several times during the day you'll find excess tension in your neck, shoulders, back, stomach and legs.

Many people find when they start to deliberately relax on a regular, consistent basis that their health improves. Why? Simple, because by relaxing they are helping to promote harmonious Qi flow through the body. And you now know how important that is.


So let's get started....

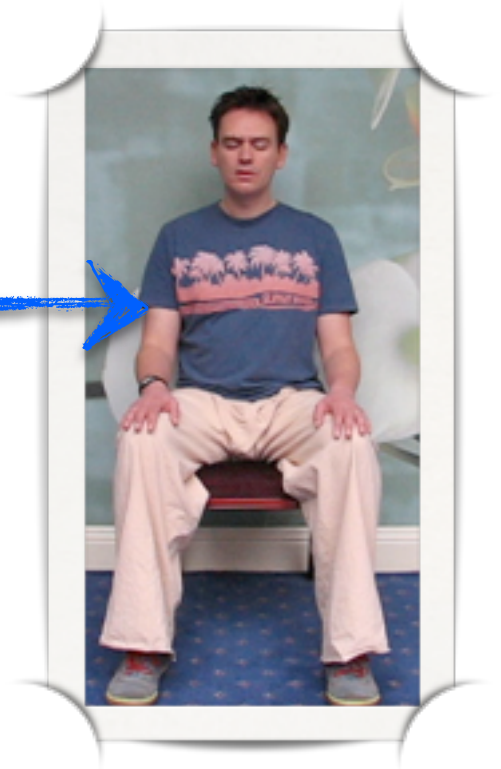




Hardcore Relaxation (cont)

The Method:

1. **Prepare:** make sure that the phone is off the hook, anybody in the house knows not to disturb you and that you have 10-15 minutes free time.
2. Get a chair and sit in an upright, symmetrical posture. You can do this lying down if you prefer, but make sure you stay awake! See the picture over here 
3. Gently close your eyes and bring your mindfulness to the top of your head. Gently bring your awareness down the side of your head, neck, continue to travel down the side of the body into the shoulders.
As your mindfulness travels down through your body you are making certain that each part is relaxed. Continue to let your awareness flow gently down through shoulders and into muscles at the front and back of the arms, down through the elbows and all the way to the tips of your fingers.
4. Gently bring your awareness back to the top of your head and now let your mindful awareness travel down through your head, neck, upper and lower back, make sure each part is as relaxed as you can currently manage before moving onto the next. Be sure to pay special attention to the stomach area, I don't know why but as a society I have noticed we do seem to store a lot of unwanted tension in the abdominal area.
5. Continue the journey of mindful relaxation all the way down through the pelvis, down through the large muscles at the front and backs of the legs, through the knees and all the way down to the tips of your toes.
6. Aim to take about 5 minutes for the entire relaxation journey from head to toe. You can take it quicker or slower if you like.





Hardcore Relaxation (cont)

7. Next step is to count the breaths. As you breathe in gently say to yourself 1. As you breathe out gently say to yourself 1. As you breathe in say to yourself 2 and as you breathe out gently say to yourself 2. And so on up to 10. Don't worry if you lose count.
8. Now forget counting the breaths, forget everything. Forget your life, forget yourself - just let go. Do not fall asleep!
9. After 5 or 10 minutes in this blissful relaxed place, rub the palms of your hands together briskly and do the facial massage.
10. Take a few deep breaths and then stand up and walk around the room briskly - to make sure your back here on the phenomenal realm of existence.

Remember relaxing is a skill that most adults have to remember how to do properly. So be sure to practice this method at least once a day.

Continue to practice Butterfly dancing at least once, but preferably twice a day. I want you to really get to grips with Butterfly dancing before moving onto Lifting the Sky - the first pattern of the 18 Lohan Hands Qigong set.

Enjoy your practice!



Summary of Lesson 3

This lesson we discovered:

Good health is our birth right

- Illness is not natural
- Our target is to live to 120 or at least 1 000 000 hours
- It's not compulsory to become weak and infirm as we age
- Life is a meaningful flow of energy

There is only 1 illness

- Yin/Yang Disharmony is the only illness
- Excessive stress, worry and anxiety, burning the candle at both ends and poor lifestyle choices weaken Yin. This is not wise.
- An increase in Yang agents is something to avoid.
- There is no such thing as an incurable disease (*but remember that doesn't mean that TCM can cure everything!*) if we can restore Yin/Yang harmony we will restore health.

How to deal with disturbances during practice

- Be prepared
- If it happens stay composed
- If you have to stop practice follow the correct procedure.

The background to the Shaolin 18 Lohan Hands Qigong set

- The Shaolin Temple was an Imperial temple
- The Very Venerable Bodhidharma (28th Patriarch of Indian Buddhism and 1st Patriarch of Chan/Zen) taught the monks a set of Qigong patterns in 527.



Summary of Lesson 3 (cont)

- The 18 Lohan Hands evolved into the 18 Lohan Fist - the prototype of Shaolin Kung Fu
- Shaolin has left a legacy to mankind known as **The Three Treasures Of Shaolin.**

A method to help us relax

- Most adults need to remember how to relax
- If you can't relax, you can't do Qigong
- This relaxation method is a complement to our Butterfly Dancing in Front of Flowers practice. Not a replacement.



Homework

1. In relationship to our health, what does Yin represent and what does Yang represent?
2. What is the only illness?
3. If a fire alarm went off in the building you were practicing in what would you do before you quickly exited the building at top speed?
4. Who is credited as the creator of the 18 Lohan Hands?
5. What are the Three Treasures of Shaolin?
6. Complete your progress tracker sheet for week 2
7. Practice the stress management relaxation technique we covered, preferably everyday, but at least 3 times this coming week. Repetition is the mother of skill after all =)
8. Continue to practice Butterfly Dancing.

Coming Up Next Week....

The **P.E.R.F.E.C.T.** system is revealed. Think of it as a shortcut that will help you to get the benefits of Qigong faster and easier.

I'll share with you the 4 stages to mastery in *any* endeavor and we'll look at the first pattern from the 18 Lohan Hands: Lifting the Sky.

Bye for now....

Marcus James Santer