

Qigong Secrets

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

Week Four

An Introduction to PERFECT....

This is a tool that evolved from my experience of helping students to get the most from Qigong quickly and easily.

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4 Stages Of Mastery

Consider this a road map of the important destinations on your trip to Mastery



Lifting The Sky

How excited am I? We take a look at the first pattern of the Shaolin 18 Lohan Hands

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Lifting Sky - Pics



Here you'll find the written instructions to practicing this pattern.

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Summary

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

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Homework & Coming Up Next Week....

Whatever you do, make sure you complete your progress tracker!!

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Welcome!



Welcome to week 4 of the home study course.

This week we'll start with an introduction to P.E.R.F.E.C.T. a tool I use with my students to help them pick up and remember the various steps involved in high level Qigong practice. Next



There are 4 major 'destinations' on the way to Mastery of any endeavor. Knowing this can help to give you the perseverance you may feel you need - as you discover where you are on your journey to Mastery.

week we'll look at this tool in much greater detail.

Then I'll share with you the 4 stages to Mastery in *any* endeavor. For any of you that are feeling overwhelmed by the material you've received so far this information will help you to understand why. And more

importantly it will act as a roadmap so you can see where you are at the moment and know where you want to go.

I'm very excited that this week we look at the first of the patterns from the 18 Lohan Hands Qigong set: Lifting the Sky. Perhaps the most well known and certainly the favourite of many Qigong practitioners. You're going to love it.

We finish of as always with a summary, your home work and a quick look at what is coming up in next weeks lesson.

Enjoy your practice!



An Introduction To P.E.R.F.E.C.T.

There's something you should know about me. I love systems (preferably tried and tested ones). I like things to be done in a structured, systematic way. I find it so much easier to learn something that is presented in a clear, logical and sequential fashion. So when I first started learning Shaolin Cosmos Qigong, it seemed to me that there were clearly separate steps. That was where the seed for **P.E.R.F.E.C.T.** was first planted.

Later as I taught my own students I noticed that I kept moving from 1 spot to another as I moved from 1 step of Shaolin Qigong to the other. The seed was starting to grow. I began to be convinced that if I could find a suitable mnemonic then I could really help my own students to learn the techniques of Shaolin Qigong much quicker and as a result they could then focus on developing the all important skills.

It wasn't until I started writing my book seriously (I started it about 2 years before I sat down and got serious about it, then it only took me a week to get the first draft!) that **P.E.R.F.E.C.T.** was born. I was sat at my desk staring at the wall. On the wall was a post-it note with the word "perfect" on it. I've no idea what it was doing there, but I noticed that it had 7 letters and that corresponded to the number of clearly different steps I felt composed a Shaolin Qigong practice session. It took me less than 5 minutes to match up the P,E,F and E. It took me a little longer to get the R and it took me even longer to get the T. All I was missing was the C.

C drove me crazy! I just couldn't seem to find a way to make Standing Meditation, Entering Silence or Entering Zen fit with the letter C. And then, whilst reading one of my teachers excellent Q and A's I read the words "Cosmic Balance". I'd found my C and **P.E.R.F.E.C.T.** was finally born in all its glory.

Now please bear in mind that **P.E.R.F.E.C.T.** is just a vehicle, a tool to aid your learning, nothing more. Let me explain. Let's say you are traveling by car to see your friend. When you get to your destination you don't take your car in with you. The car has done it's job and you leave it where it is when you no longer need it. The same can be said of **P.E.R.F.E.C.T.** when you absolutely know how to flow with unconscious competence (see 4 stages to Mastery) from one step to the next in your Qigong practise, without having to think about it then you no longer need to use **P.E.R.F.E.C.T.**



An Introduction To P.E.R.F.E.C.T. (CONT.)

So what does P.E.R.F.E.C.T. stand for?

- P** stands for preparation. When ever you do anything it is vital that you are prepared, that you're switched on and focused on what you're doing. It's like a signal that tells you: 'right, I'm ready to do my practice now'.
- E** stands for enter a Qigong state of mind. This is 1 of the 3 core skills of high level Qigong. It's like relaxation on steroids, it's relaxing physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. It's a skill and like all skills the more you practice it, the better you will get at it.
- R** stands for really smile from your heart. The best way to 'relax' spiritually is to smile from the heart. Remember from the previous lesson - don't think about how to do it, just do it =)
- F** stands for form. This is what most people know as Qigong. It's the pattern you are practicing. As we go through this course this is the only part of your practice that will change. Don't worry too much about this now, I'll go into in greater detail as we progress.
- E** stands for energy flow. This is the 2nd core skill of high level Qigong. You use the form you have chosen to generate an energy flow, or Qi flow or Flowing Breeze Swaying Willows as it is more poetically known. This is where you let go and do nothing. You let your Qi do the work of flowing to any areas of low energy (blockages) in the meridians and removing the blockages. I repeat you don't do anything!
- C** stands for cosmic balance. This is the 3rd core skill of high level Qigong. If the signature of energy flow is movement (Yang) then it's Yin partner is stillness. Hence cosmic balance. Now we enter silence, standing meditation or standing Zen as it is also often referred to. You clear your mind of all thoughts and be still.
- T** stands for time to complete. It is important that we finish our practice properly before leaving the 'cosmic realm' and heading back to the 'phenomenal realm'. If we don't it is easy to shock our system as we move from calm and peaceful into hectic and busy.

Like I said this is just a quick introduction. Next week we'll be covering these 7 steps in great detail and applying them to Lifting the Sky. Then we'll have started to practice Qigong!



The Four Stages to Mastery in *Any* Endeavor

Let's take the example of learning to drive a car skillfully to explain these four stages:

1. **Unconscious Incompetence** - at this stage you don't even know what you don't know. You have no experience of driving what so ever and even though you think you might know what is involved (having watched others do it) you really don't.
2. **Conscious Incompetence** - as you sit in the seat at the start of your first lesson, you suddenly realise that there is a heck of a lot more to this driving lark than you first imagined. Steering the car is a nightmare, changing gear is impossible and you've got to look out for other motorists as well. You may begin to wonder if you will ever get the hang of this at all.
3. **Conscious Competence** - after much practice and a fair number of lessons you are now able to drive the car, change gear, mirror-signal-manouver safely and keep awareness of what everyone else is doing as well. But the concentration involved is very demanding and if someone asked you a simple question you might not be able to answer without crashing. Your total focus is on driving the car - but you can do it and reasonably safely most of the time!
4. **Unconscious Competence** - your desired destination. Now you have passed your test. You can drive along, listen to the radio, have a conversation with your friend. You don't have to think about what you're doing at all. You just do it naturally and effortlessly. You are well on the road to Mastery.

How long it takes you to travel from one stage to another depends on a number of factors. The main one being how much time you dedicate to mastery of your chosen subject. For example, I only had 10 driving lessons and past my driving test first time aged 17. Sounds pretty impressive right? Not really. My dad and I were living in a flat, he had a company car, we had no TV and nothing to do in the evenings, so I drove around under his supervision for at least 2 hours a night 5 or 6 days a week.

The same applies to your practice of Qigong. Now you don't want to be practicing for hours every day. No. But you do want to be practicing twice a day, every day if you are serious about progressing quickly. And if you're are super serious about Mastery of Qigong, you will be a good student. Which means following the instructions and not trying to be smarter than the teacher (at least not yet!).

So, don't worry if you're feeling overwhelm at the moment, just keep practicing and following the instructions to the best of your ability and you'll do well.

Both Hands Lift Sky

雙手托天

Chinese: Shuang Shou Tuo Tian



Also Known As: Lifting the Sky

At A Glance:

Excellent for Generating Chi Flow
Treatment of Hemorrhoids
Improves Health in all its aspects



Form “Both Hands Lift Sky”

1. Start from Wuji stance (fig.1).
2. Turn your hands, fingers pointing to each other, palms facing the floor and look down at your hands (fig. 2). See detail 1 and 2.
3. Keep looking at your hands as you raise your arms through 180 degrees (fig. 3, fig. 4 shows the side profile of this move).
4. Gently push your palms to the sky (fig. 5).
5. Straighten your hands and lower your arms gently back to the side of your body (figs. 6 and 7). Your head comes back to the level position.
6. Pause
7. Repeat from step one 15-20 times.

Important notes:

Move your head – look down at the hands (as in fig. 2). Move the head upwards as you raise your arms (figs. 3 and 4). Lower your head to the level position as you lower your arms (fig. 7). Repeat.

Keep your arms straight – (but not locked out) and keep gently pushing forwards all the way through the 180 degree movement (fig. 4). It is very common to see beginners with a pronounced bend at the elbows and when they “lift the sky” all that happens is that their arms straighten out. The arms must be already straight and when you “lift the sky” you will feel a gentle stretch down the sides of your body. This is a very pleasant sensation.

All movements are relaxed and gentle – with your fingers pointing to each other (detail 1) palms facing the floor, there will be natural muscular tension in your forearms. Only use as much tension as is needed to get the job done, no more, no less. It is common to see new students almost gritting their teeth as they perform “lifting the sky”. Remember you are relaxed and your movements are gentle.

Both Hands Lift Sky

雙手托天

Chinese: Shuang Shou Tuo Tian



fig.1



fig.2



fig.3



fig.4



fig.5



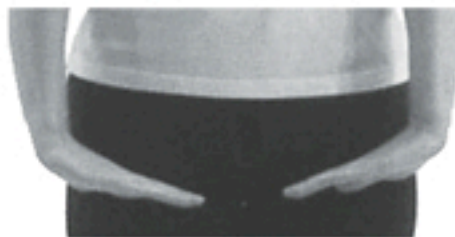
fig.6



fig.7



fig.7



detail 1



detail 2



Breathing The breathing for Lifting the Sky is in four parts:

Pause means no breathing in and no breathing out. As you can see from the diagram below the pauses are not as long as the breathing in and breathing out cycles.



1. Breathe in gently through your nose as you lift your arms above your head (fig. 3 and 4).
2. Pause as you lift the sky (fig. 5)
3. Breathe out gently through your mouth as you lower your arms (figs. 6 and 7).
4. Pause in Wuji stance. Continue to pause as you point your hands together palms facing the floor and move your head to look down at your hands (figs. 1 and 2).
5. Repeat from step 1.

Note: The pauses are important, especially the one after lowering your arms back to your sides.

Why you may choose to practise Both Hands Lift Sky

Both Hands Lift Sky is excellent for generating energy flow. It overcomes posture problems and is good for those with a bad back. It benefits people who find it hard to relax, who think too much and find it hard to focus. Those who have post birth incontinence can find relief with this pattern.

I have also used this pattern with great success on students who have suffered from Haemorrhoids. The key additional instruction if you wish to use Both Hands Lift Sky to overcome this problem is to gently imagine everything below being pushed back into its correct position as you “lift the sky” (fig. 5).



Summary of Lesson 4

This lesson we discovered:

An Introduction to PERFECT

- P - Preparation
- E - Enter a Qigong state of mind - a core skill
- R - Really smile from your heart
- F - Form - your choice
- E - Energy Flow - also known as Qi flow and Flowing Breeze Swaying Willows
- C - Cosmic Balance - also known as entering silence, standing Zen
- T - Time to complete

The 4 Stages to Mastery In Any Endeavor

- Unconscious Incompetence
- Conscious Incompetence
- Conscious Competence
- Unconscious Competence

Lifting The Sky

- Form
- Form + Breathing



Homework

1. Complete your progress tracker for Week 3 - **VITAL**, why not do it right now?
2. What does P.E.R.F.E.C.T. stand for?
3. Consider the 4 stages of Mastery - which stage do you think you are at now?
4. Practice Lifting the Sky: Form until confident and then add the breathing. Practice 10-15 repetitions once or twice a day. Note: this takes over from your Butterfly Dancing practice.

Coming Up Next Week....

We will be looking at P.E.R.F.E.C.T. in great detail and applying it to the pattern Lifting the Sky. By the end of next weeks lesson, you'll know all you need to know to practice high level Qigong. You won't be practicing high level Qigong, because it takes time to really get the skills. But if you put in the time and follow my instructions, you'll be able to start cultivating those skills in double quick time.

Bye for now....

Marcus James Santer