

The Power of Qigong

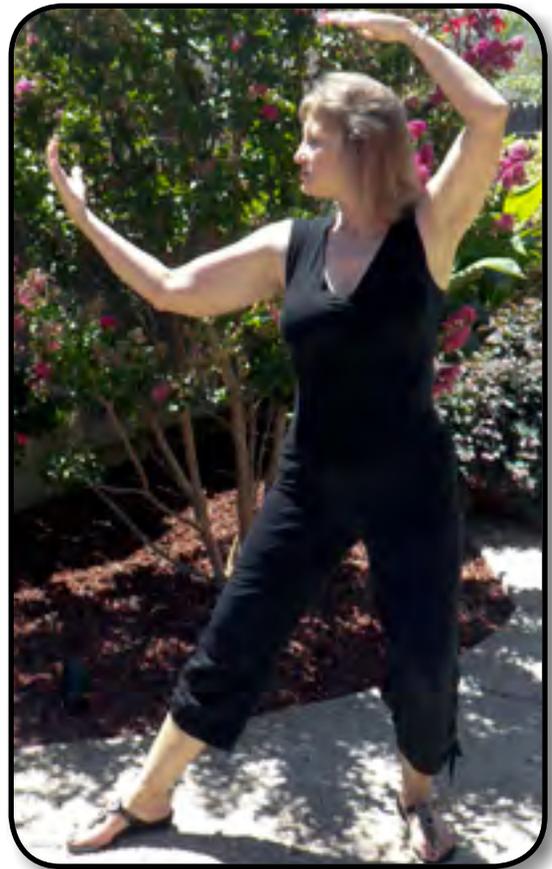
By Deveron Long
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Last year, in an attempt to broaden my daily spiritual practice by adding something more embodied to my daily sitting meditation, I took up Tai Chi. What I quickly discovered is that even the easiest form of Tai Chi, such as *The Infinite 9* (only 9 of 108 total movements), takes considerable time to learn and additional time to practice in order to master the choreographed steps. I had hoped to eventually teach Tai Chi to seniors to improve their balance and overall wellness as the research shows significant improvements in these areas for individuals who practice Tai Chi daily.

After a month of learning the steps and practicing daily for 5 to 10 minutes to smooth out the movements, I began to realize that while I certainly appreciate the challenge, someone my mother's age may not. I kept the practice for myself and continued to search for an easier alternative for seniors.

After a little more research, I learned that Tai Chi, a martial art form which is about 1,000 years old, actually arose from Qigong—pronounced “chee” (life force) + “gung” (skill)—an ancient Chinese system of healing and medicine dating back more than 3,000 years. Qigong incorporates gentle, repetitive movements, relaxed breathing, and meditation to cleanse and strengthen the body with Qi, or life-force energy.

Qigong has been scientifically documented to aid in stress reduction and overall wellness, and because it includes sitting, standing, and reclined versions, it can be performed by almost anyone regardless of mobility or stamina. In my



mind, providing such a simple, low-cost healing resource to the world population for better health, increased vitality, and reduced stress is critically important in these times of great imbalance, unrest, and expensive health care.

“To stand straight is to give up the burden of insecurity. To breathe slowly is to take life as it comes, without allowing memory or expectation to interfere. As the body becomes quiet, the mind becomes quiet. The Qi flows not only within the body, but between oneself and Nature. In breathing, the external world becomes you. Yet you do not own it, you let it go and return breath to its source-- what Chinese people call the Tao.”

A Spiritual Renaissance: Reflections on
A Qigong Life, by
[Kenneth S. Cohen](#)

During my very first Qigong session (15-20 minutes), I could feel the energy—a palpable sensation flowing from my hands and around my body to the point that my entire body vibrated with a “hum” of wellbeing. I was so energized that I included this in my daily spiritual prac-

tice. Even though the movements are gentle and seem as though they couldn't possibly aid in any sort of physical transformation, my body began to change. The wobbly underarm flesh disappeared, my waist reappeared, and my overall muscle tone improved. Qigong was the low impact, no cost, no stress, easy-to-learn modality I had been searching for—for myself and for others! So now I would like to share the power of Qigong with you.

If you choose, you can purchase DVDs from a multitude of organizations and individuals on the internet. I have included many of the links below in the website section. However, there are plenty of **free resources** online as well, so I would recommend starting there and gaining some exposure before purchasing anything. The benefit of Qigong is the ease and tranquility that it offers—so avoid imposing limitations on your experience by focusing on form and memorization.

Here's how to get started. View the following links, choose your favorite (free) You-Tube versions, and after a few sessions, you can perform Qigong without any guidance whatsoever. Qigong can be practiced anywhere, and is an excellent energy booster at work whenever you feel the need to replenish yourself. There are two key factors to focus on while performing Qigong: 1) your breath, and 2) the energy pulsating through the energy centers in the body. This is easiest to detect in the palms of the hands. Truly feel the power of Qigong. This is the power you will use to heal yourself and the world.

Qigong Videos—Standing Qigong

[Tai Chi Nation's Guide to Qigong Part One](#) (22:10)

~ This is an excellent introductory video that explains qi, shows a few energy centers, and provides 4 sessions: warm-up, simple movements, a longer version (still very simple), and a lovely self-massage that feels wonderful and can be performed sitting or standing.

[Tai Chi Nation's 5 Element Qigong](#) (7:51) ~ An additional five moves (fire, metal, water, earth, wood) to add to your repertoire. A helpful rear view demonstration is included.

[Eight-Form Moving Meditation](#) (38.33) ~ This is one of my favorite selections for daily practice as it includes all segments of the body. Created by Dharma Drum Meditation Center, these easy-to-learn exercises based on Qigong movements can be practiced almost anywhere and at any time. The video at the link below offers a

three-minute introduction to the benefits of the moving meditation followed by a 35-minute guided session. Once learned, this segment can be reduced to 8 minutes (1 minute per movement) or expanded infinitely. The video can also be downloaded to your own computer for offline viewing. A separate printable copy of the instructions is available on the website.

[Sample Qigong Exercises](#) ~ Ten qigong movements – six simple movements and four challenging movements. These can be put together in any number of ways to create longer sessions. (Inner Rivers Flowing is a personal favorite).

[Kuan Yin Standing Qigong Part 1 - Sheng Zhen](#) (9:51)

[Kuan Yin Standing Qigong Part 2 – Sheng Zhen](#) (9:23) This two-part series is graceful and reverent and feels so very soothing. The narrator guides the listener with meditative visualizations to accompany the fluid movements.

[Return to Spring: Movements 1-5](#) (10:00)

[Return to Spring: Movements 6-11](#) (9:47)

[Return to Spring: Movements 12-14](#) (3:43) ~ Ahhh. Allow the tranquility of the music, narration, visualization, and flowing motions of these three videos to permeate your body, your mind, and your spirit. This set focuses on the healing connection of nature.

[Heart-Mind Therapies](#) – This is a fascinating series of simple Qigong movements accompanied by inspiring scenery and uplifting narration connecting the physical movements with the psyche. Many of these videos can also be located in You Tube.

Qigong Videos—Sitting Qigong

[Roger Jahnke "Sitting Qigong"](#) (4:39) ~ I highly recommend this video for all humans trapped behind a desk/computer for many hours a day. This movement is very beneficial for mindfulness and stress reduction.

[Sheng Zhen Healing Qigong - Part 1](#) (6:45)

[Sheng Zhen Healing Qigong - Part 2](#) (6:26)

[Sheng Zhen Healing Qigong – Part 3](#) (3:16) ~ These three videos have **no sound or music**—which may be perfect for the workplace. All are seated qigong movements to maintain energy flow for those who have less

mobility due to physical restrictions or occupational restrictions. Find a few movements that energize you, and use them frequently throughout the day.

Qigong Informational Videos

[Qigong, Ancient Chinese Healing for the 21st Century](#) ~ by the Qigong Institute

[Discovering Qigong](#) ~ by the National Qigong Association

[Daisy Lee Talks about the Gifts of Qigong](#) ~ by National Tai Chi and Qigong Day

Qigong Websites for More Information (and to purchase DVDs)

Qigong Institute ~ A not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting Qigong through research and education. This site provides free video instruction, podcasts, and the Qigong Energy Medicine database with over 6,000 abstracts of scientific studies in English.
<http://qigonginstitute.org>

The Global Qi Project ~ This amazing website was created by James MacRitchie to educate and involve the world in understanding and embracing Qigong because of the important implications Qigong has on a personal, social, and global level. At the very top of the page is a link to a free downloadable copy of the 186 page book *Eight Extraordinary Meridians* in pdf format. The site also includes free Qigong training lessons with free audio downloads. My personal thanks to James for this contribution to humanity.
<http://globalqipproject.com/>

Qigong Research and Practice Center ~ Kenneth Cohen's website provides detailed explanations and eloquent readings about the practice of Qigong. Workshops, trainings, DVDs, CDs, and books are available for purchase on the site.
<http://www.qigonghealing.com/qigong/qigong.html>

National Qigong Association ~ Promoting health through breath, movement, intention. A membership organization for qigong. Be a part of the Qi Flow and the Qi Excitement that is moving through our country.
<http://nqa.org/>

Exercises to Heal ~ An internet store in which to purchase Qigong DVDs by Lee Holden. There are a multitude of sample videos that are beautiful and inspiring, and the informational pages on Qigong provide a well-written summary of health benefits of this Eastern healing modality.
<http://www.exercisetoheal.com/>

Gaiam Life ~ A "green" web magazine offering articles on a variety of issues such as social and environmental responsibility, health and wellness, and personal development. This is a great resource for tai chi and qigong video clips.
<http://life.gaiam.com/>

Qigong Stress Management, Healing, Anti-aging, and Meditation ~ Jeff Primack's Qigong site is your solution for stress management, healing, classes, anti aging, meditation, exercise, breathing, natural healing, and stress reduction. The site also boasts information promoting food healing.
<http://qigong.com/>

International Institute of Medical Qigong ~ This site discusses the therapeutic modality of Qigong in Chinese medicine. Traditional Chinese Medicine is a comprehensive system of health care addressing the root cause of symptoms or disease, and treats the client as a whole. The site is an excellent resource for those who may be interested in becoming certified as a medical qigong practitioner, therapist, or doctor.
<http://www.medicalqigong.org/index.htm>

Radiant Lotus Qigong ~ Daisy Lee Garripoli is a certified qigong instructor and clinical practitioner. Although Daisy is also involved with [Wuji Productions](#) and [Kahuna Valley](#), Radiant Lotus Qigong has been designed specifically for the needs of women's health.
<http://www.radiantlotusqigong.com/>