

Qigong is a system of exercise that originated in China and is based upon the principles of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture. The movements are done softly and slowly and can be described as a Meditation in Motion. The practice of Qigong teaches us how to use energy in our body to promote mind/body wellness. This can also be explained as energy healing.

The easy-to-learn Qigong exercises strengthen the immune system and are used as a type of preventative medicine to keep the body functioning at an optimal level. For the same reasons, Qigong is helpful for those who are recovering from an illness or injury and can hasten recovery time and healing. This makes Qigong accessible to those who are already healthy as well as those whose state of health is impaired.

The main theory behind Qigong is that we each possess an essence of internal energy, called our Qi. Our health depends upon the ability of our Qi energy to flow freely throughout the body, and illness occurs when the flow of energy becomes sluggish or blocked. This essence of Qi flows along a network of internal pathways in the body called meridians. These pathways connect to all our internal organs so that the Qi energy can flow to them and support their healthy functioning. Qi flow can be negatively affected by lack of sleep, improper eating, unmanaged stress, negative emotions, poor posture, medications, and many other causes.

The Qigong movements were developed in such a way as to assist the flow of Qi inside the body and can be targeted to support the health of specific organs such as the brain, heart, intestines, lungs, liver, gallbladder, kidneys, bladder, stomach, spleen and pancreas. By virtue of the way we move the body we can create an acupuncture like effect to open up blocked energy and over time restore health. This system also allows Qigong to become customized to promote healing based on an individual's unique health needs.

To practice Qigong is to cultivate life force energy. It can also be explained as the skill one obtains over time in learning how to discover, recognize, and strengthen their internal energy. This sense of energy is something we all have; it is our birthright. When we practice Qigong, we develop the ability to awaken this intrinsic power and circulate it to increase our healing potential.

Qigong is now practiced by millions of people throughout the world and is a safe, natural, and effective way to promote good health. The purpose of Qigong is to connect and tap in to the creative life force energy in the body. When we perform the Qigong exercises, we combine the gentle movements with our breath work and mind focus or intention. This enables the Qi energy to move freely and is the basis for the theory that good chi flow equals good health.

Some specific benefits of a Qigong practice are lower blood pressure, relief from stress, pain and stiffness, improved balance, flexibility, circulation, and coordination, better digestion, increased energy, a more restful sleep, a delay in mental decline so people can stay

independent longer, and many, many other benefits including prevention and healing from major illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, digestive issues, and arthritis to name just a few.

Respected institutions like the Mayo Clinic, John Hopkins University and Harvard Medical School have all published studies reporting the amazing health and fitness benefits of a Qigong practice. Qigong helps everything, because it brings harmony and balance into our lives.

Chinese medicine also recognizes the impact of unhealthy emotions on our physical health. Feelings of worry, grief, fear, anger, and anxiety are toxic and draining. When we practice Qigong and gain mental clarity we can change our perspective on the way we think and feel about things and learn to live authentically with compassion, courage, wisdom, kindness, and joy for ourselves and others. Practicing Qigong also helps us to have a more optimistic and cheerful disposition and improves our sense of intuition and creativity.

The most important thing to remember about Qigong is that it is very healing and has many health benefits. What appears to be simply gentle exercise is very powerful mind-body medicine. Anytime you are quieting the mind, connecting to the breath, and practicing the flowing movements of Qigong, you are energetically clearing the way to live an active, happier and healthier life.

I am so grateful for the presence of Qigong in my life and am very passionate about helping people learn about Qigong and discover and experience their own healing power.

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