

# Way of Hunyuan

A Personal Odyssey

混元之道



Chen Zhonghua

According to Master Chen, the classic tenets on Qigong must be understood and accepted in order to gain the maximum benefit from this antiquated discipline. This book did just that. It provided authentic information from ancient China on the subject of Qigong.

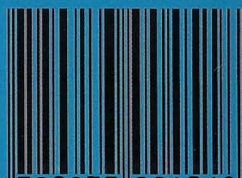
Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang's Hunyuan Qigong system is used in this book to illustrate the richness of Qigong in health, in self-cultivation and in martial arts. The book is filled with personal experiences. The Qigong glossary at the end of the book makes it a useful reference source.

Master Chen Zhonghua is a famous martial artist and Qigong master. He received his training in China from Grandmaster Hong Junsheng and Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang, two of the greatest martial artists in China.

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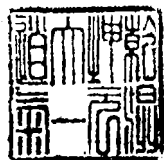
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# ***For Jean, Rita and Rachael***

## **Way of Hunyuan: a Personal Odyssey**

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Way of

# HUNYUAN

By

Chen Zhonghua

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This is not an instructional book. It is intended as information and reference for practitioners of Hunyuan Qigong and Qigong. For instructional materials on the same subject, please refer to other titles by Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang or by this author.

This book is based on anecdotal and experiential materials. This book is not intended to discredit any scientific knowledge in any way or manner.

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Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang  
18<sup>th</sup> generation Chen Style Taijiquan  
Founder of Hunyuan Taiji System

To  
My Beloved Shifu:  
Feng Zhiqiang.  
The first generation Zongshi<sup>1</sup>,  
Who gave the world  
Hunyuan Taijiquan

献给  
恩師  
冯志强  
混元太極拳  
一代宗師

---

<sup>1</sup> This term refers to a grandmaster, to whom is credited the creation of a new style in martial arts.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book does not only contain information directly written down during the course of the composition of it, it contains the knowledge I have gained over many years in pursuit of this art. It is for this reason I am acknowledging my gratitude to the many people that made this book possible.

My years of promoting the art of Qigong and Taijiquan have been a process of "Teaching and learning complement each other<sup>2</sup>." I have not only learned so much from my masters, but also from my fellow martial art brothers and sisters. In addition, I have benefited a great deal from my disciples and students. They have, over the years, provided invaluable feedback for my deliberations on the subject of Qigong. It is in this view that I consider them my teachers.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my good friend Liu He of Shenyang, China. It was he who introduced me to professor Feng Xiufang, daughter of grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang. Through the introduction of Liu He, and the recommendation of professor Feng, I successfully applied for and was accepted as a disciple of Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang<sup>3</sup>. I also thank Mr. Liu He for his tireless enthusiasm in accompanying me on many of my Qigong and Taiji missions to China over the years of 1993 to 1999. Without his expert tour arrangements and helpful participation, I could not have made those journeys of thousands of miles across China from the "Ten Thousand Mountains" that border Viet Nam to Harbin in the far north.

I owe many thanks to my Taiji sisters Feng Xiufang and Feng Xiuqian for their guidance over the years in my learning and practice. It was invaluable to receive extra assistance and correction from them after my learning

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<sup>2</sup> This is a quote from Confucius.

<sup>3</sup> The actual induction ceremony was held on January 18, 1998 in Grandmaster Feng's apartment in Beijing China. Present were Grandmaster Feng and his wife, Master Feng Xiufang, Master Feng Xiuqian, Master Chen Xiang, Master Tang Yaoxin and Master Duan Jin.

sessions from their father. Many times, Grandmaster Feng taught me things that I could not understand or could not remember. Their patience in working with me to prepare me for another lesson was part and parcel of my learning experience. They are my Taiji sisters and teachers.

Over the past few years, my disciple Yaron Seidman of New York, New York, USA has assisted me in both teaching and research. I thank him for all the extra work that he has done on my behalf in promoting the art of Hunyuan Qigong. In this book, he graciously wrote an article on Qigong.

I also would like to thank my disciples James Tam of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada and Richard Johnson of Bentonville, Arkansas, USA for their constructive suggestions during the course of writing this book. Their frank and open opinions made me rethink the way the information is presented. My Disciple Thomas Yeung's timeless assistance in all aspects of the photographs is also greatly appreciated.

Although I was the one who physically penned this book, my dear wife, Jean, is the support that made it happen. I thank her for allowing the many learning and research trips that I took across the ocean to China, leaving her and my two daughters behind. Many a night, when I was writing in my private study in the basement, she would quietly come to supply the table with, snacks, water and food, no matter if it was midnight or 3 o'clock in the morning. Her love and unwavering support invigorated me to complete this book.

To my daughters, a thank you for their patience and understanding while their father was physically absent from them on so many occasions: weekend workshops out of town, writing late at night or traveling across the oceans for weeks.

Last but not the least, there is one person that deserves the most credit. It is my master Feng Zhiqiang. This is a book for him, in appreciation of his tutelage over the years.

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# INTRODUCTION

In this book, I offer my perspective on some important issues in learning, practicing and cultivating of Qigong. This is only my "little peeping hole into the vast knowledge source of Qigong". It is not a complete guide. It is not intended as a learning tool for people who are interested in Qigong. It is my hope that by reading this book, readers can increase their interest of Qigong and gain more knowledge of it. For those earnest learners, personal instruction and formal and systematic instructional materials are required.

概  
说

I have based this book on my very limited personal knowledge of Qigong. My direct source of Qigong information is from Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang<sup>4</sup>, who taught me the Hunyuan Qigong system. It is a Qigong system specially designed for health and martial arts. In addition, I have also had an avid interest in this subject since childhood and have actively sought information and tutelage for more than 20 years.

Some of the anecdotal information provided is from family and childhood folklore. As I have read a large number of the Daoist Cannons<sup>5</sup>, inevitably I must have been heavily influenced by information from that source. Some of the quotes used in this book are from my reading notes back in

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<sup>4</sup> He is a legendary martial artist in China today. He is also an 18<sup>th</sup> generation master of the Chen Style Taijiquan. Please see Glossary entry and Chapter at the end of this book on him for more information.

<sup>5</sup> Known as the Dao Zang. It is an officially appointed list of Daoist reference books. The most complete official list is from the Ming Dynasty. There are 5485 volumes in this collection. I read most of the volumes related to Qigong for personal interest. Unfortunately, a casual reading of these great works of wisdom does not enlighten the reader, as the language used is drastically different from that in use today. Though I personally specialized in ancient Chinese language during my early university years in Shandong, China, I still find the reading of classic works on Daoism, Yijing (I-Ching, Book of Changes) and other specialized works difficult. My formal government designated course of study was English and Russian.

my high school days. Therefore the sources given are not always consistent with Western required methods.

Standing in front of the vast ocean of resources and knowledge of Qigong that have been accumulated over the last 2600 years and more, I realize that I am just a beginner. I am starting to understand why my first Taijiquan teacher, Hong Junsheng<sup>6</sup>, insisted on calling all his students "schoolmates". Indeed, in the learning of Qigong and Taiji, we are all students at different stages of the pursuit.

In writing this book, I have not followed the traditional book writing format and methodology. I have not attempted to avoid controversial issues.

Original records and writings on Qigong have always been kept in ancient classic language that is obscure, vague and ambiguous. Some of the writings are totally illogical in the eyes of modern people. A classic method of deciphering this kind of writing is via the many colourful and anecdotal stories. There are many such stories in the Daoist and Chinese folklore. I have included a few in this book to help readers understand the ancient obscure concepts.

As Chinese language is a pictographic language, I used Mandarin Chinese Pinyin<sup>7</sup> as the method of Romanization. Pinyin is a system of writing designed by the Chinese government in the 1950s by using the Latin alphabet to transliterate the Chinese sounds. Among Western writings of Qigong, there are many systems of spelling Chinese words. Footnotes are used in this book to clarify different spellings of the same words.

Although I have attempted to write this book in a way that is easy to read, I have not been able to do so to all the ideas and concepts included in all the chapters. Some are due to the facts that they are difficult concepts. Others are difficult to read because of my inability to express them in a

---

<sup>6</sup> Grandmaster Hong, 1907-1996, was an 18<sup>th</sup> generation grandmaster of Chen Style taijiquan. He was a major disciple of Chen Fake, who was a 17<sup>th</sup> generation family member of the Chen Family of Chen Village in Wen County, Henan Province. Many accredit the Chen Village to be the birthplace of Taijiquan.

<sup>7</sup> There are several other systems of Romanization of the Chinese language.

better fashion. There are others that are difficult to follow because the logic of ancient concepts are not consistent with our logic and thinking pattern today.

Yaron Seidman, my disciple, contributed the chapter titled "Research on Qigong".

For young and enthusiastic talents, I "throw the brick to entice the jade"<sup>8</sup>.

Today, there are all sorts of Qigong masters teaching, promoting Qigong and using Qigong to help people with their ailments. You can find a long list of Qigong masters in a yellow book anywhere in the world. Of course, among all the masters in the public domain, there are bound to be "good" ones and "bad" ones. This is no different than any other profession.

One thing is for sure: if one wants masters of and/or information on Qigong they are readily available. It wasn't so when I grew up, trying to heal myself and trying to learn the traditional ways, including Taijiquan and Qigong in China in the 1960s.

"You must have been made on a Friday!" my wife used to say to me. That was 15 years ago.

"One of these days, I am going to make that phone call." She would tease me like this. What she really meant was that I was such a defect as a product (if you can call a human being a product) that as my wife, she really should have the right to return me to the MAKER and ask either for a refund or a replacement. That was our private family joke many years ago.

My beginning was beyond humble. It was simply harsh. My survival until today can also be called a miracle. When my father was notified of the news that a third child was born, he took leave and hurried home from where his army was stationed. The hundred-mile road home took a full

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<sup>8</sup> This is a Chinese idiom that means to provide a forum for the coming out of, and growth of certain things.

day and night on foot. He had to trek through mountains, jungles, and river, all in the cold November weather of Northern China. This was the cold winter months of 1961.

As he entered the makeshift house in the village of Lingdong, or east of the hill, he first asked to see the newborn. "This one is no good." My mother told him. "I threw him out. You can go see for yourself, if you want. In the valley in the back."

Father ran to the valley and carried me back into the house, without even looking at me. According to my father's accounts, my body was frozen solid. They didn't dare touch anything so they just lay me in what was meant to be a bed and let me thaw out slowly. They did not know whether I was alive or dead. Amazingly, several hours later, I became 'alive' again! Apparently, I wasn't dead in the first place. It took them several months after that to take the cloth wrappings off my body as they were all frozen into the body. What happened was that the body had suffered severe frostbite and the skin was swollen with puss. The puss had then bound the cloth onto the skin. My wrists, ears, belly and feet were the worse areas with lots of large scars to show for it, even today.

When I was born, I was full of hair on my body and on my face. This made my mother suspect I was a monkey child<sup>9</sup>. To make things worse, my mother discovered that there was a huge protrusion where the tailbone was. This further convinced her that I was not totally human. So to save me from the misery of trying to live in a human world, she decided to end my life. She did not have the heart to kill me so she bundled me up and left me outside in the valley, hoping a stray dog would do the job.

The protrusion was actually a huge boil and my father simply squeezed the puss out of it. All that was left was a scar, which I still bear today. Mother said that though I was human, I was not meant to live. The next many years of my

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<sup>9</sup> The local folklore says that monkeys can become spirits and get into pregnant mothers. If this happens, the child will be monkey-like and will not be able to live like a human.



life proved her to be right. My wife and children wonder whether I am angry at my mother for what she did. I don't. She did what she thought was right. A poor pregnant woman with no food to eat certainly had the right to protect herself and her existing family. While pregnant with me during the years of famine, she first ate the vines of sweet potatoes, then grass, and then tree barks. She never had any meat during her entire pregnancy<sup>10</sup>.

By the time I was three years old, I had developed an enlarged liver, asthma, arthritis, rheumatism, and chronic bronchitis. Mistreatment of chicken pox by an inexperienced doctor also left me with permanent skin damage: my skin became coarse and scaly. It was itchy all the time. I was constantly scratching my waist area, which caused this entire area to be bloody all the time.

I also had problems swallowing food. As I frequented doctors, they discovered that my poor little heart was situated too close to the oesophagus. I had to eat slowly and sleep on one side of the body only.

This was how life was for me. At such a young age, I didn't know any better. I thought that was normal so I didn't suffer from any depression or anxiety. A young child can take a lot!

My father related to me my first encounter with Qigong:

*One day in the morning, you refused to get out of bed. We looked at you. Your face was all pale and purple, as though life had left you. We called for the barefoot doctor<sup>11</sup>. He came and examined you. He couldn't find any problems with you so we sent you to the hospital. The paediatrician said the same thing, but we knew you were dying. You were three-years old, but physically you were like a one year old. You couldn't, or wouldn't tell the doctors anything.*

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<sup>10</sup> After I was born, my father managed to get half a pound of bacon from a farmer. For that, he was court marshaled by his military command and sent to the military jail in Jiaoxian, eastern Shandong province for three months. When he returned to the army, he was demoted by two ranks.

<sup>11</sup> During the "Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) of Mao Zedong, many people in the country were quickly inducted as doctors in the poor areas of China where there were no doctors. These people had no or little medical knowledge. They were only able to treat little very simple disease.

*We were desperate. We didn't know what to do. Your mother called for your San Laoniang (Number 3 Grand Aunt). She was the village witch doctor that I didn't care too much for.*

*She wrote something on paper, murmured to herself and then burnt the paper. She first placed her hand on your forehead and then pointed her index finger at your belly button. She did this for about 15 minutes. Your mother and I were both bending over you, watching. We literally saw color returning to your face. You were saved. Don't ask me how and why. I don't want to believe that kind of stuff, you know. I am a communist.*

San Laoniang was the village witch doctor. Father warned our entire family to stay away from her, as she was a symbol of the feudal society that father didn't want any part of, though he didn't say anything about her curing me that time. Over the years, I saw increasing evidence that she possessed a power that cannot be described or understood by modern science. She used talismans, verbal conversations with the Daoist deities, massage, Qigong (I didn't know it was Qigong at that time) and sometimes, modern medicine. As I grew up in Communist China, and especially during the Cultural Revolution<sup>12</sup> (1966-1976), I did not believe in any of the cultural traditions. I viewed them as superstition and evil. But my San Laoniang was amazing. She was helping people and curing people. People respected her. She influenced my formative growing years.

One year, my grandfather (on my mother's side) was ill and my whole family went to see him. San Laoniang lived in the same village. I was playing at her house, looking at all the weird things on the wall and statues on the shelves. A man came to the house to ask her to cure his six-month-old son. He presented one dozen eggs as payment for the service. San Laoniang looked at him and calmly asked him what he planned to do with the other dozen eggs. His jaw just dropped. Without a word, he took off. Soon he returned

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<sup>12</sup> For the people who are not familiar with this event, it was a massive people's movement started by Mao Zedong to rid China of everything that was old. He motivated the young students to topple the government bureaucracy and his political enemies. Most of China's ancient symbols and relics were destroyed during this time.

with another dozen eggs in his rattan basket. He apologized to San Laoniang profusely, admitting that he was saving the eggs, just in case San Laoniang couldn't help his son. San Laoniang didn't even look at him. With controlled voice, she told him to go home to check on his ailing son<sup>13</sup>.

Apparently, when he went home that day, his son had recovered. I could not understand at my early age, then, how San Laoniang knew that he had another dozen eggs. San Laoniang just smiled and said that there were many things I could not understand.

In my early years, my fascination with martial arts and qigong was due solely to my poor health. I was always the one that everyone picked on in school. I therefore, had always fantasized receiving amazing powers to defeat those who bullied me. I started Wushu when I was nine years old on my own. There were no teachers around town, so I made up forms and practiced in secret. I always hoped that one day this magic power would come to me. Later, I befriended Wang Ping, a classmate. It was rumoured that he was learning secret martial arts from his grandfather. When we became good friends, I asked martial arts from him. There was no problem, except that I was not allowed to ask his grandfather to teach me. That was all right with me, Wang Ping was good enough. Every morning, we met at the town bridge. Sometimes I arrived before daybreak and could hear Wang Ping training with his grandfather. But as soon as the horizon became light and I could see, they would stop. This went on for over 6 months. I did not have a clue what they were doing. I learned Baji<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> At San Laoniang's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1991, I recognized this man again. He had become her adopted son by then. I asked him about the egg event. He said that he only had two dozens of eggs. On the way to see San Laoniang, he decided to save one just in case the witch doctor was not as good as her reputation. He dug and buried the eggs against a tree so that he could pick them up again on the way home.

<sup>14</sup> It is a martial art style. It is characterized by rapid and powerful thrusts of the fists and heavy foot stomping. Many of the Qing Dynasty royal guards were from this style.

from Wang Ping and I was thrilled about it. As Baji was very noisy during practice, I noticed that when Wang Ping practiced with his grandfather, there was no noise. I asked him about this.

"We don't do Baiji. My grandfather teaches me Qigong before daybreak!"

"What is Qigong?" I asked.

"I am not allowed to tell you about it. My grandfather learned it from his father. He is already very upset that my father didn't wish to learn. Sorry, that's all I can say!"

I made nothing of it. When I casually mentioned this to my father, one day, he told me that Qigong was just a secret practice of the underground rebels<sup>15</sup>. There was something hideous about it. On the contrary, gong fu was better. My father's eyes beamed and his whole face became animated when he started his story.

Every winter when harvest was completed and all the farming chores were done, grandfather would gather all the villagers at the Chang (a place of flat compacted ground for harvesting) and do his gong fu. His Four-Gate Broad Sword was the best. When he played that broadsword form, the kids were given soybeans to throw at him. No one succeeded. His broadsword was so fast that only a white flash was visible to the bystanders.

With this kind of family influence, naturally, my love fell on gong fu, instead of Qigong.

At our junior high graduation ceremony, some loud students started a chant to demand Wang Ping do a martial art trick. Our teacher even joined the chant. Unable to talk his way out of this, Wang Ping agreed to do something. He asked for a porcelain dinner plate. There were many as we all

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<sup>15</sup> My father was part of a government crack down on a group of rebels called "Red Scarf Army". This group started in the Five Lotus Mountains of Wulian after 1949. By 1952, there was a formal leadership structure in this organization. Their number skyrocketed to over 10,000. They practiced a kind of Qigong that made them believe that they were angels from Heaven and were not vulnerable to human attack such as guns. The People's Liberation Army put them down in 1954.

eat at the school. He took the plate, smashed it on the desk and put one sharp piece on his palm. Then with the thumb of the other hand on the broken porcelain piece, he crushed it into a powder in the palm. The powder was so fine that he blew air into his palm and it disappeared!

This trick genuinely impressed me. I did not know that Wang Ping, my best friend, had such a rare talent. Immediately, I begged him to teach me. "No, that was not gong fu. It was Qigong and my grandfather does not want to teach it to anyone outside of my family." Later, I learned that his lineage came from the Longmen (Dragon's Gate Sect of Daoism that originated in Muping, Shandong Province), a little township a few hundred miles east of my hometown.

In the early 1980s Big Wild Goose Gong (Da Yan Gong) and Crane Flying Gong (He Xiang Zhuang) were popular. Many of my university friends joined the practice. Wang Jigang, a roommate of mine, started the Crane Flying Gong with the university group. After 21 days, as promised, he started "Self Activated Movements" (Zifadonggong). He could not control his Qi. Often times, he would get up in the middle of the night and go running in the woods until he was exhausted. He claimed that he did all that in his Qi state, unconsciously. He was happy for a while and then started to complain. His Qi was leaking out of his fingers all the time. He was losing his original Qi, he told the other roommates (seven people stay in one room). He eventually quit and returned to normal life. This happened to many of my university friends.

In early 1980s, I was learning Chen Style Taijiquan from Grandmaster Hong Junsheng at the Black Tiger Springs Park in Jinan, Shandong. Our practice area was high up on the top portion of the park on the platform. Below us, right on the ground with all the natural water springs of the Black Tiger, were people practicing the Wild Goose Qigong every morning. What I noticed was that they all stand for about 25-

30 minutes in a Zhanzhuang<sup>16</sup> posture and then one at a time, they would start a strange dance. They would move in the strangest ways, sometime defying laws of nature and gravity. What is more interesting is that no two people would move the same way. Each one did an individual dance. This is, according to them, Qigong induced heavenly dance. They did not dance. The Qi inside their bodies MADE them dance!

I stayed behind after our morning Chen Taijiquan class and made some private inquiries. The instructor told me that the standing Zhanzhuang brings out the latent Qi that resides in each person. That Qi then starts circulating inside the body. Whenever there is blockage, the Qi would rush the blocked area, causing the person's body to move involuntarily. Movements of this nature will not cause damage to the body. Instead, they cure the ailments. Sometimes, latent or hidden ailments are cured.

One morning I saw a woman of about 35 years of age jumping up and slamming her lower back hard on the dirt ground. She repeated this at least 20 times. When she returned to normal state (Shou Gong), she acted utterly normal, as though it were not her who did the slamming. She told me that she was told by her master to check it out in a hospital. She had kidney problems. The Qi had gotten stuck there. It made the body slam that area on the ground to loosen the blockage. I continued to watch this woman for over 3 weeks. There was no discernable damage to her at the time.

I have to admit that I would rather see people waltz in the park early in the morning than see them do Zifadonggong. They all appeared to be under the influence of drugs. There were many things that demanded further investigation, but at the time I was not impressed by these phenomena.

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<sup>16</sup> Standing cultivation, or meditation. It is a form that is practiced by both Qigong and Taiji practitioners. Practitioners of Xingyi and Dacheng Quan also practice a variation of this practice.

In September 1993, I took a group of models from Canada to China on a daring mission to promote western fashion in China. Considering the conservative nature of the country (we stayed at the North Eastern city of Shenyang most of the time) at that time and the liberal nature of the Canadian models, it was a task of enormous proportion. The constant stress brought back my old rivals: asthma and bronchitis. At one time, I was coughing non-stop.

The many Chinese partners on this project offered their help. I was taken to see the best professor of Chinese medicine in the province. The professor was said to see no one but high-ranking officials from the country. Indeed he commanded that kind of authority. There were at least a dozen interns with him, rushing around, making notes all the time. He was very decisive. "You have extreme Yin Yang imbalance!" He declared after taking my pulse. In trying to convince him how serious the problem was I told him that back in Canada, the test results show that I was allergic to almost everything except water. "Of course! You don't have to tell me that! Your body is not balanced. It must reject everything!" He wrote rapidly on his doctor's pad. He handed it to one of the interns, who in turn, handed it to me. It was like the "Book of Changes", all Greek to me.

I went to the pharmacy and faithfully took the prescription. I took the medicine, though bitter and foul smelling, according to the prescribed method and schedule. It did not help.

My partner and good friend Liu He came to visit one day. Seeing how much I was suffering from coughing, he suggested that I met his friend Liu Weiming, a Qigong master. I was quite upset at this suggestion. I had seen too many doctors and masters, Western and Chinese. I had decided to deal with this problem my usual way: through practice of Taijiquan.

Mr. Liu was very persistent. After all, he declared, I had nothing to lose. His friend would not charge me a dime. He would not even touch me. It would only take 15 minutes. I went along with that.

Master Liu Weiming was a man of smaller stature in his late forties, appearing to be very energetic. His manners were normal. There was nothing pretentious about him. He was eager to talk. He did not fit into the stereotype of a Fu Manchu type of inscrutable Chinese master. I rather liked him. We had tea and talked. At the time of the visit, some of the models were in my suite. They had come up to my suite to see the nightlight of Shenyang. My suite was on the 28<sup>th</sup> floor, overlooking the city. They stayed on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

We did not talk about Qigong, or my bronchitis. As I heard the noises of the models at the window, I had an idea. "Why don't I test him with these models? They don't know anything about Qigong. He doesn't know them. This is perfect."

I told him my plan. We were not to interrupt the girls. They would continue with their conversation and whatever they were doing. They were facing away from us at the time. Master Liu would do something to them to show that Qigong is real. I told him that I would believe him only under this condition. Otherwise, I would attribute his ability to the power of suggestions and a whole host of other factors that I was not interested in.

We were a good 15 feet away from the girls. He asked me to pay attention to the third girl from the left. Jody was from a small town in Alberta, Canada. She was 20 years old that year. She didn't speak Chinese, never had any Chinese friends and virtually had no experience or knowledge of the Chinese culture. Of course, that included Qigong.

Master Liu pushed his right hand forward. Jody jerked forward. She turned to the other girls and asked who pushed her. After the usual tug-of-war of words, they settled down again. Then Master Liu waved his hand sideways. Again, Jody swayed sideways. Jody's movements were obviously the result of being moved by Master Liu.



Sima Nan<sup>17</sup> made a name (and a lot of money) in recent year debunking quack Qigong masters. He started off learning Qigong, promoting it and then became critical of it. He is not someone out there with a vengeance, or vendetta against Qigong. He simply wanted to expose the frauds, like in any other profession.

Nowadays there is a saying among the Qigong practitioners, "I have contempt for Heaven; I look down upon the Earth; but I am dreading a visit from Sima Nan." The heaven and earth analogy is not part of the Qigong terminology. It is part of a Chinese vernacular that describes how non-fearing a person is. There have also been newspaper reports in China about Sima Nan cooperating with Americans (I am referring to the person who offers cash rewards for people who can show any power beyond human capacity.).

Sima Nan uses all possible methods. He is knowledgeable on Qigong, on medicine, on Chinese religion and philosophy. He is also an accomplished magician. In most cases, he can reproduce what the Qigong master can demonstrate on the spot while assuring his audience that he does it with magical tricks, not Qigong.

In the fall of 1997, he paid a casual visit to Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang. He wasn't there to "debunk" or prove anything. It was just a simple friendly visit. Naturally, the conversation went towards Qigong and all the outrageous claims going on in China. Knowing that Grandmaster Feng was a famous Qigong master, in addition to being a Taijiquan master, Sima Nan sought his comments on the subject.

"If Qigong were what those charlatans portray it, humans should have been living on other planets already!"

Sima Nan then politely tested Grandmaster Feng. He used a method for martial type of Qigong, not the normal healing type. He held Feng's body. Feng made one breath, inhaling and exhaling once. Sima Nan let go and sat down on

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<sup>17</sup> In most cases, a Chinese last name is made up of a one-syllable word, which is also one character. Siman is one of the rare double-syllable last names in China. Another example is Situ.

the old couch. "Incredible! This is Qigong! The real Qigong! There is absolutely nothing special, nothing hidden and yet there is absolutely no way I can do it. Not in this life!" he exclaimed.

Later on he explained that with the charlatans, you simply know, experience and feel the master as an average person. There is no "process" to be experienced. All of a sudden, the results will appear. Even then, you know that the master is still the same. Nothing really happens. With Grandmaster Feng, you feel the process of Qi transformation in his body. You know it is real; it is physical. You can feel how every bit of air breathed in is translated into energy that moves throughout the body. This whole and complete process cannot be faked. "Grandmaster Feng cannot move objects telepathically. Theoretically speaking, his ability is ranked very low in the echelon of Qigong. But in reality, all my years debunking Qigong and knowing many good Qigong masters and practices, I have not met one person who can actually do what he does!"

Yes, indeed. He has not cured people from across the ocean through telepathy, like some have claimed to be able to do. His energy has not left his body and travelled freely into the mountains, like some like us to believe. He has not stopped eating and breathed air only (called Bigu, avoidance of grains in Qigong terminology), like many have been promoting. He is a simple man. He does simply things. He even appears childish, in his 75 years of age. He is special, though, because his skills are all genuine.

By 2000, I had been experimenting with Qigong diagnosis on people for a while. I would use the normal way of moving my palm over a person's body to try to sense irregularities in Qi vibrations. I made extensive notes of my interpretations of the person's problems based on my findings and compared them to what the person told me. I usually kept my interpretations to myself and asked the person to tell me their versions first. This way, I could substantiate the validity of my Qi sensations.

I also made sure that I did not tell people ahead of time what I was doing, even with people who were not familiar with Qigong. I simply told them to stand relaxed and have their eyes closed. After I apply my Qi diagnosis on them, I would continue the class and say nothing about it. Later on, I would find a tea break to ask them about their medical history and previous physical injuries, etc. Except with my disciples and private students, I did not tell the people what I was doing.

"A little learning is a dangerous thing!" as Francis Bacon wrote. I had such an experience at the early stage of Qigong. I was teaching a class at the University of Alberta one winter. Most of the participants of the class were professors and researchers. There were a few young university students too.

Part of the explanations that I gave in regard to very specific questions was that one should learn Qigong as a whole in the beginning. At a much later stage, one can get into technical details. Over all large movements, connections, flow and sensations were far more important early on. Towards the end of the term, one professor couldn't resist the temptation any longer. He wanted me to show some immediate results of the acupuncture points and meridians.

He specifically asked about the point close on the inside of the forearm close to the wrist. He had purchased a device (like a wrist band) from a local store to be used for airsickness. The point he was talking about was Neiguan. I picked a young lady right in front of me for illustration. I did not want to touch her, since I did not know her well. I asked her to stretch her forearm out so that I could point to the Neiguan point for everyone to see. My hand was at least 3 feet away from her. As soon as I started pointing, she reacted in a strange way. She said that she felt something going into her stomach through the Neiguan (where I was pointing). Not believing what she said, I asked her to sit down to rest. I had thought that she was just tired. After a brief discussion, we resume our class. The lady remained

sitting at the corner of the hall. She then lay down on the floor. In a few minutes, she had to go to the washroom. I sent a woman to go with her. She had thrown up in the bathroom.

When she came to class the next time, she said that she was a 24-year old university athlete. She was very healthy and had never been ill before. What happened in class freaked her out. What she did not know was that it freaked me out more. At that time, I did not know what to do under such a circumstance. I did not know enough.

Qigong is a science, albeit one that is not the same as we know it in the West. It is a system of learning with many aspects to it. It should be studied in sombre and methodical manners. Attempts to treat it as a quick fix will not lead to any significant benefit to the learner.

## WHAT IS QIGONG

Qigong is a term that covers a wide range of activities associated with physical and spiritual exercises for health, for martial arts and for self-cultivation. It is on the whole an indigenous Chinese exercise<sup>18</sup> system that incorporates elements of Daoism, Confucianism, Buddhism<sup>19</sup> and martial arts. All Qigong systems must incorporate these three aspects into the practice: mind-intent, posture (movements included) and breathing. One will find many different definitions of Qigong. This does not mean that one definition is correct while others are incorrect. The definition of Qigong evolves as one goes through different phases in his/her learning. At each stage, the definition will differ to the learner. This has to do with the depth of understanding. It is not possible that one can practice the same art for years with the same understanding. At the beginning, it is purely an attempt to preserve life through controlled breathing exercises. Later on, it becomes a larger concept that encompasses disciplines such as "isometric exercise, guided imagery, isotonic exercises, meditation, herbs, the body's own chemicals of healing, and a number of other responses that are not yet understood by medicine"<sup>20</sup>. To have a better understanding of this exercise system, one needs to look at it from several aspects.

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<sup>18</sup> Although there is considerable Buddhist influence in Chinese Qigong system, it is still considered in China as a pure Chinese-born product. The Chinese like to view the foreign influence as "borrowed from the foreign elements and adapted to suit the Chinese aim." Therefore, there are not many substantial foreign elements in it. At least we can contend that at the very start, Qigong was a Chinese invention. The influence that accorded it in the centuries that followed can be viewed as enrichments, not changes.

<sup>19</sup> We can say that the influence of Buddhist yoga on Qigong is very strong but the fact remains that Qigong is still a predominantly Chinese system. There are quite a few totally independent Buddhist Qigong exercises in China too.

<sup>20</sup> See "The Healing Art of Qigong", by Hong Liu. Page 283.

In Qigong the human body is not viewed as a machine. It is viewed as a structure for something great. The body is somewhat like an English idiom, whose meaning is more than the sum of its words. For example, the saying “hit the nail in the head” has nothing to do with either head or nail. One has to accept that the combination of those words generates a new meaning. Our human body is made in such a way that the individual parts such as head, torso and limbs all work in concert to generate an identity that is the person. Modern science has proved today that except the brain<sup>21</sup>, all other body parts can be replaced. We also know that the person remains the same in every way when a particular body part is replaced.

Ancient Chinese medicine did not pay as much attention to individual body parts as modern medicine does. The body was studied for its functions, not parts. For example, the heart is an area of the body that functions as one meaningful unit<sup>22</sup>. There is the obvious Three Warmer System<sup>23</sup> that Western medicine cannot physically find.

The views on the sperm are another example. The ancient Chinese viewed the sperm and essence as one of the same. The word Jing, in Jing, Qi and Shen, is the word sperm. The Chinese had no problems, technically and culture wise, to directly refer the essence to sperm. It has been so widely used and accepted that it sounds normal. In English, it will sound odd to write, Sperm, Qi and Soul. So we instead, have a modified version, Essence, Qi and Spirit<sup>24</sup>. The problem with this approach is, that the readers are not allowed to savour and decide for themselves the meaning of words in their original sense. Many Chinese modern scientists have looked into the sperm in light of this assertion and have

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<sup>21</sup> It will be of great interest to find out whether the replacement of the brain will actually change the person. If so, then it is safe to say that the person's identity is in the brain.

<sup>22</sup> Among the rich literature of Chinese Qigong practices and medicine, there is little documentation of human anatomy. This is another example of how the ancients viewed the body differently.

<sup>23</sup> It has been referred to as the Triple Burner System.

<sup>24</sup> These are the three treasures of the human body.

found the sperm to be of no particular significance. Thus the reference to sperm as a major point of Qigong studies is easily dismissed. We have also done so in the West.

But all the description and analysis cannot explain the mystery of Qigong. Certainly there is more to this ancient art than meets the eye! Let me use an analogy to further illustrate what Qigong is.

We cannot clearly define what Qi is. We know that it is an energy form. We know that it moves and can be summoned by people to "do things" (such as cure disease and make the body strong, etc.). So what we are looking at is really something real, something concrete but something small. It is really small, so small that it is smaller than electricity, smaller than air, smaller than light or radio waves. So small that it permeates everything. That makes it powerful!

How can we use this energy? The key is to make a connection. To make this connection is the **merge with the Dao**, in the language of the ancients.

Say that you are one individual who lives in North America. You are aware of the facts that there are over 13 billion people in China. You do not know one single person in China. Now there are two practical facts here: (1) Regardless of whether you agree, or you are aware, there are 13 billion people in China; (2) The 13 billion people in China are the equivalent to 0 to you because you do not know any of them.

Because of the fact that you have never known or met one single Chinese person in your life, you even doubt the assertion that there are 13 billion people in China. You think in your mind: "Wouldn't it be the greatest thing if there are 13 more billion people are on this planet!" It is very likely you think this is just wishful thinking. It is a mystery.

I am going to prove it to you that there are 13 billion people in China by making one single connection between you and a Chinese person. I believe that once that connection is made, you will automatically believe the fact. Other means of persuasion may or may not work. The method I use is to secure one telephone number of a Chinese

person, test using it and then give it to you. Compared to many other methods, this one is simple enough (The Great Dao is Extremely Simple).

At the time you receive the telephone number, all you need to do is to listen carefully and write it down. There are many wonderful things you can do (such as asking about the owner of the number in China, etc.) but they are irrelevant. Just write it down; questions later. Write it down, and write it down correctly. Once you have the correct number, good telephone equipment, the right timing when both parties are present at the phone, voila! You have made a connection!

In Qigong, the telephone number is the secret (code). The Qigong form is the method. The learning of the form is the writing down of the phone number. The practice of the form is the memorization of the form. The mastery of the form and then the practice become the process of dialling the number. This is what Qigong is about.

There are also many types of Qigong systems in traditional circles that are practiced without proper titles. For example, one of the earliest documentation of Qigong was by Zhuang Zi<sup>25</sup> when he talked about the art of Tu Na. He described that the ancient wise men breathed with their heels while most common people breathed with their throats.

The following are some of the commonly known Qigong system:

Ba Duan Jin (Eight Pieces of Brocade)

Wu Qin Xi (Five Animal Frolic)

Da Yan Gong (Great Wild Goose)

He Xiang Zhuang (Crane Flying Pile Standing)

Yi Jin Jing (Tendon Stretching Classic)

## **AN EXERCISE**

Qigong is also practiced as an exercise. Some schools have specific exercises designed for the training of certain parts of the body, and for designated purposes. These

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<sup>25</sup> A revered figure in Daoism. He is only second to Laozi. Most of the Daoist philosophy was developed by him after Laozi's Dao De Jing. Please refer to the Glossary Section to see more details on him.



included exercises for health. In this category, Hua Tuo's<sup>26</sup> "Five Animals Frolic" system is a fine example. Others have very little to do with physical exercises. They concentrate mainly on mind cultivation. This school, the Northern School of All Truth Sect by Wang Chongyang (see glossary entry for more information on him), was propelled by the idea that the mind must be freed to achieve eternity. The physical body is only a "stinky old sack" that houses the mind (spirit). It has no value to be saved.

On the whole, northern schools concentrate on spiritual cultivation at the expense of physical well-being. Southern schools put more emphasis on physical training. This distinction has also been called the cultivation of the MIND or of the BODY<sup>27</sup>. Another school of thought comes out of this synthesized thinking. It is called the "Double Tracking School". Today, many schools claim to train students on both Mind and Body. The idea is lofty. But true knowledge is not summarizing what others have said. In this case, a good practice method does not have to be one that includes everything others have done. This is not to say that Mind and Body cannot be cultivated at the same time in the same

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<sup>26</sup> See entry in Glossary about this famous ancient doctor.

<sup>27</sup> The original character for Mind used by Daoists has heart on the left and life on the right. Roughly put, therefore, mind is the meaning of the heart. Mind, Spirit, or Soul are also other words for the same idea. In the West, it has been translated into NATURE. This is a correct translation. However, this also led many to think that Daoism simply is an art and philosophy that follows the way of the nature, in the sense of the natural environment. This is only partial true. Unfortunately, this character also means sex. This is a major cause of confusion throughout history in Daoist pursuit. People interpreted this word according to the meaning of sex and formed their own branches by pursuing the cultivation of sexual energy into Qi. This becomes even more complex later on as the term "Cultivate the Essence Into Qi" seemed to give credence to the sexual interpretation. The character for Essence is also the same as the character for sperm. It is the author's contention that sexual energy is an important and primal energy of the human body, but it is not the source energy for Qigong cultivation. The true essence is almost the same as Sperm, and they inhabit the same physical space. They, nonetheless, are not the same things. The true essence is that of the original energy we were given, not the sperm that is generated in this body.

body; it certainly can be done. One must find out, however, whether the claim is legitimate or just 'fancy talk'.

Today, the idea of Qigong as an alternative exercise is becoming a popular one. It fits in with the needs of modern people. As an exercise, the physical movements of Qigong are usually slow and soft, much like those of Taijiquan. When viewed and practiced as a pure exercise, Qigong is effective without having side effects. However, 'no pain no gain'. Do not expect miracles. It is not a magic bullet. The merit of Qigong in this fashion is by and large motivational and physical. The benefit to the people who practice it is also physical. It is not much different from any other known moderate and balanced exercise. The particular requirements of Qigong, slow, soft, rounded, even and light, make it very safe for people of all ages and physical conditions. On the contrary, many Western exercise systems cannot make this claim.

For a more serious and professional Qigong practitioner, exercise is not viewed in a physical sense. The movement of the Qi is the most salient character. The **Qi** (energy) must take precedence over physical power. Because of this feature, exercises from Qigong systems are drastically different from modern sports. People deeply involved in this aspect will soon find out that Qigong is more than an exercise. Even at the rudimentary level, it is fundamentally different from all other known exercise systems.

Qigong exercises are simple and easy to learn. For example, the Hunyuan Qigong system of Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang only contains 12 repeated forms. Each form, in turn, is made up of several undemanding movements. The simplicity makes it an ideal exercise system of choice today.

### **A WAY OF LIFE**

To fully benefit from Qigong, one needs to view Qigong as a way of life. One must "Walk the walk", so to speak. This is definitely a very difficult task to accomplish because the modern way of life is incongruent with ancient Qigong practices.

In ancient times, this meant that the practitioner literally followed the austere Daoist way of life, resulting in celibacy, void of politics, void of worries of daily family responsibilities and full time devotion to mental and physical discipline. In reality, these are the Daoist hermits who went into the deep mountains to live. According to historical and oral records, almost all famous immortals, such as Zhang Ziyang, Wang Chongyang, and Chen Tuan (see General Glossary for more on these immortals), received the Dao<sup>28</sup> in the mountains.

These practices were not considered esoteric in those times. People accepted it as part of the discipline of Daoist cultivation. Those who were seriously pursuing a Daoist way of life were prepared to take up this discipline. As a matter of fact, there are still many manuals in the Daoist Cannons preparing people for this path. There are even procedures on how to save money to prepare for the journey. It was generally acknowledged that one must have sufficient financial resources to hire at least 3 attendants during the time away from the mundane society. This could mean a few months or several years in the mountains. Those who took up this practice were called "the Great Hidden Ones" (Da Yin). This term is now synonymous to a high level of ability in the martial art world.

Another approach is the opposite of the above. It was termed "the Genuine Great Hidden One is in the Metropolitan"<sup>29</sup>. According to this approach, the practitioner must experience or be subject to all the known vices of human life and emerge uncorrupted by them. There are numerous accounts of immortals in the past that lived in whorehouses, in the royal palaces, as robbers, as beggars, etc. Usually a punch line of such stories is that these people

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<sup>28</sup> To receive the Dao means to be enlightened in the Daoist way. It means the practitioner has reached a level that he/she is full of Qi in the body and that he/she has merged in spirit with Earth and Heaven. One who receives the Dao is considered an immortal.

<sup>29</sup> This reminds me of the song that asked the question what if God is among us on the bus and all he wanted is to go home.

could resist the temptation of all vices and only follow their Daoist way of life.

This kind of amazing and extraordinary stories<sup>30</sup> inspired millions of people throughout history to pursue a Daoist way of life.

What are the qualities or criteria of a Qigong way of life? There have been no systematic record or a list given in the past. Each person had to come to an understanding of these rules and principles through his/her own constant pursuits. This was the hard way with mistakes, waste of efforts and time and sometimes, fatal consequences. The following story will shed some insights into this.

*Zhong Liquan<sup>31</sup> of Han Dynasty was a famed Daoist immortal. He was the one who inducted Lu Dongbin into the ranks of immortals. In doing so, he had to test Lu Dongbin ten times.*

**One.** *One day, when Lu came home from a long trip, he found that everybody in his family had died. He wasn't sad about it. He thought that life and dead were just part of the cycle of natural life. He, matter-of-factly, went to buy coffins to bury his family. At this time, everybody came to life again. On seeing this miracle, he was not overjoyed. Zhong Liquan thought that Lu's mind was as tranquil as the still water. Mundane events in life no longer bother him. He passed the first test.*

**Two.** *One day Lu went to the market to sell something. He had already agreed on a price with the buyer but then the buyer changed his mind. He only would pay half of what he had agreed to pay. Lu didn't get mad. He happily*

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<sup>30</sup> These are the kind of stories that appear impossible to believe in today's terms. The validity of the stories are not to be checked. They are not to be viewed for accuracy and historical value. They must be viewed as analogies of life and pursuit. Examples of such stories are the monk who stood outside of his master's house for 14 years every night and in the end cut his left arm off to show devotion; the immortal who stood on one leg facing the sun for 9 years; the genuine man who slept in Qigong state for 9 years; the man who spent 9 years in a whorehouse and fried up eggs on his thigh, etc.

<sup>31</sup> Both Zhong Liquan and Lu Dongbin were among the eight famous immortals in the Chinese folklore.

accepted the new price. On completing the transaction, he gave the goods to the buyer and left without taking the buyer's money. Zhong Lique thought that Lu has passed the test of financial self-interest.

**Three.** During the first day of New Year, Lu ran into a beggar on the street. When asked for money, Lu gave him some. The beggar, however, was not content. He wanted more. What was worse, he was verbally abusive to Lu and threatened to cut him with a knife. Lu gave him all his money and offered his arm to the beggar's knife. The beggar didn't cut him. He walked away laughing. Zhong Lique believed that Lu had passed the gate of crime and vengeance. He passed the test again.

**Four.** When Lu Dongbin was a goat herder, he ran into a tiger on the road. In order to protect the goats, he blocked the road with his own body. The tiger was moved by his bravery and left without hurting him or the goats. Zhong Lique said that Lu had passed the test of life and death; he had passed the test again.

**Five.** Lu was reading a book in his mountain hut. A well-dressed beautiful girl of eighteen appeared in front of him. She claimed to have lost her way and wanted to stay for the night. She tried everything she could for three nights to get him into bed with her. He wasn't moved at all. Zhong Lique passed him on the test of sex and desires.

**Six.** Upon coming home from a picnic one day, Lu found that his house was broken into. The robber took all that had any value. He didn't get upset or lose hope for life. He worked on his land to try to scrape up a living. One day, while ploughing the field, he dug up ten gold nuggets. He immediately reburied the gold. He wouldn't take anything that he didn't deserve. Zhong Lique thought that Lu had passed the test of the seduction of money.

**Seven.** Lu came home one day from the market to find that the bronze utensils he bought were all made of gold. He immediately returned the goods to the merchant. Lu passed the test of honesty.

**Eight.** *A street peddler was selling a drug that promised instant immortality. The condition was that the person who took the drug would die right away so that he could go to heaven to become an immortal. Everyone was scared of dying first so no one bought the drugs. Lu bought some and took them right away. Well, he didn't die. This proved his sense of righteousness even in the face of death.*

**Nine.** *Lu was in a small boat with several people during a flood. The boat went into a whirlpool. It rocked violently. Everyone was scared. He remained composed and held on to the boat to steady it. Everyone was saved. This showed that Lu had strong self-control and faith in what he was doing.*

**Ten.** *When he was meditating in his house one night, many monstrous looking ghosts appeared before him. Some threatened to kill him or others threatened to beat him up. A devil came to him with a bloody head in his hand. He demanded Lu's head for a crime he committed in previous life. Lu said that since he committed such a hideous crime then he must pay for it. He took a knife and was about to kill himself. A resounding voice came from above. All the devils were gone. Zhong Liqian appeared and announced that Lu had passed all tests.*

Today, we cannot live like those extraordinary people in the past. Time has changed. Finding a way to live in constant Qigong or Daoist mood and yet not compromising one's life style is the key in the pursuit of this ancient discipline. Those few who found such a way became enlightened, those who did not benefited only in a physical sense.

What does one have to do to be in a constant Qigong state? The many aspects of Qigong that are discussed in this book will shed light to this topic. We know from anecdotal stories that whatever the immortals<sup>32</sup> did, they did it to test and enhance their ability, not to be sidetracked in their pursuit.

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<sup>32</sup> For a definition of an immortal, please see related chapter in this book.

The practitioner must be seriously devoted to the art of Qigong and must not think that haphazard effort will suffice. Lip service to the practice is worth nothing. As the master would say, "You must put both feet on the ground and not be afraid of getting your feet wet." Too often people like the idea of Qigong, not the content. They have all the Qigong paraphernalia, the right lingo, and the correct physical demeanour, but they lack the substance. Ye Gong was such a person.

*Long time ago, there was a man called Ye Gong, or Mr. Ye, in today's term. He was known for miles around as the man who loved the dragon. So much so that his life was filled with dragon objects. First, there was the dragon gargoyle on the roof, then the pair of stone dragon statues guarding the door. There was a stone relief dragon on the courtyard wall. Inside the house, dragons were all over the place too. The walls were covered with beautiful dragon paintings. Stone and clay dragon figurines were scattered all over the house. Even Mr. Ye's pillowcase was embroidered with a dragon!*

*One day, the dragon became curious about this Mr. Ye. He wondered why Mr. Ye was so fond of him so he decided to pay Mr. Ye a visit. He descended down from heaven and poked his head into Mr. Ye's window. As he moved his head around to see all the dragon objects, he made a noise that alerted Mr. Ye. Mr. Ye saw the dragon's head in the window. He was so scared that he lost control of his bowels. He took off like a rocket from his living room and ran to the courtyard. From the courtyard, he ran to the street and then continued until he collapsed on the outskirts of the village. Mr. Ye never returned to his house after the incident.*

The morale of the story is that Mr. Ye liked to associate himself with dragons because the POWER that dragons represent. At most, he liked dragon things. He never liked dragons and never bothered to find out what dragons were really about.

We have to ask ourselves: Am I Mr. Ye?

## A MARTIAL ART

All styles of martial arts encompass two aspects: one is the training of techniques designed for fighting and the other the true ability in actual fighting. The techniques of martial arts are called **Fa**. The ability is called **Gong**. The master says, "If you practice Fa all your life without working on Gong, you will live until your old age empty handed." Indeed many people have wasted their lives training in martial arts without achieving any substantial ability. This is also true for Chinese martial arts. One hears many wonderful and fantastic stories about the unbelievable high-level martial art ability of ancient masters but cannot find any proof of these abilities in the masters who are living in the present day. Many masters today train in their particular style all their lives but cannot defeat a boxer<sup>33</sup>. What does this mean and why is this so? This does not mean that Chinese martial arts are inferior. The fact is to the contrary. Chinese martial arts are vastly more advanced than sports such as boxing in the field of actual combat fighting. The reason for the failure in producing highly skilled martial artists is because of the recent (close to a hundred years already) preoccupation with the stage-performing type of form lacking the substance of Gong.

Through my teachings in North America in the past dozen years, I have felt an increasing resentment among students of martial arts for lack of progress. There have been many who seriously pursued martial arts for more than 10 years without reaching a deserving level. There are many reasons for this but the most important one is the lack of training in Gong. Gong has to be part of the training curriculum for one to progress properly.

We have seen in recent years a surge towards this type of foundation work<sup>34</sup>. They are mainly on silk reeling

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<sup>33</sup> You will not hear this kind of information in formal printed or visual media. The official version is always how a thin and small Chinese master defeated a humongous foreigner. This indeed has happened, but not as often as we are led to believe.

<sup>34</sup> Although proponents of the real Gong are still the minority in the field, they are making positive waves. This is a good sign for the future and for



and Qigong. These thousands of years old practices are being incorporated into martial arts training in North America now.

Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang's Hunyuan Qigong system directly infuses much needed power to martial art training. I have a student from a karate school. He continues his karate training while taking Hunyuan Qigong classes. After only a year, he became so powerful that nobody in his club dares to practice with him any more.

Ideally, Qigong can be practiced as a martial art. In reality, most martial art systems today only include Qigong in their curriculum as a catch phrase without any due diligence to it.

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the survival of martial arts. This is especially true in North America. Many traditional masters are more valued in the West than in China. This has caused the beginning of an exodus of good martial art masters from China to the West.

## HISTORY

Qigong, as a medical keep-fit activity, has a history of several thousand years in China. As tradition has it, in the times of Yao<sup>35</sup>, people had already realized that dancing could strengthen health. For instance, the chapter "On Ancient Music" of Lu's Spring and Autumn Annals recorded: "From as early as the original of previous Tao and Tang families, yin tends to stagnate, incubate latently and accumulate in the depth of the body; the water passages are thus blocked up and water no longer flows in its original right passages; Qi smoulders and stagnates within the body; the muscles and bones cower and shorten and can not extend properly, then dancing it created accordingly to remove the stagnancy and obstruction."



Later on, some dances gradually developed into physical and breathing therapies. In the process of fight against nature, ancient people gradually realized that certain actions, breathing and pronunciations can regulate certain functions of the human body, such as extending the limbs being able to dissipate heat, huddling up the body to keep out cold, the sound "ha" to dissipate heat and remove stagnancy, the sound "hei" to subdue and discharge physical strength, the sound "xu" to alleviate pain, etc.

The ancient theory that "the bear will contract itself when climbing a tree and the bird will stretch its legs when flying in the air" was formed in this way in practice.

In the Zhou Dynasty (11th century B.C.-771 B.C) there had already been records on qigong in the inscriptions on ancient bronze objects. Lao Zi (6th century B.C) recorded the methods of "exhaling and inhaling". Zhuang Zi further recorded "exhaling and inhaling, getting rid of the stale and

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<sup>35</sup> This is part of the period of the Five Emperors that dated about 2600 BC to 2100 BC.

taking in the fresh, contracting like the bear and stretching like the bird, all help prolong life."

"Jade Pendant Inscription on Qigong", a historical relic of the early Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods (770 B.C-221 B.C.), recorded the training method and theory of Qigong. The inscription was engraved on a 12-sided cylinder, containing altogether forty-five Chinese characters. In English, the inscriptions translates into "In promoting and conducting Qi, depth promises storage, storage promises extension, extension promises descent, descent promises stability, stability promises growth, growth promises retreat, retreat lead to heaven. Heavenly Qi functions from above, earthly Qi functions from below. Conformity to this leads to life while adverseness to this leads to death."

Here not only the training process of the small heavenly circuit<sup>36</sup> is clearly explained, but the health-preserving principles of qigong are also expounded. Among the historical relics unearthed from the Han Tomb No. 3 at Mawangdui, Changsha, Hunan Province, there was a silk book "On Abandoning Food and Living on Qi", and a silk painting Daoyin Illustrations of the early Western Han Dynasty period (3rd century B.C.). The former is a method of "inducing, promoting and conducting Qi; while the latter displays 44 coloured "Daoyin Illustrations" in which illustrations of training exercises are painted.<sup>37</sup>

This shows that China already used the form of illustrations to teach qigong no later than the early Western Han Dynasty period.

In the Han Dynasty, the earliest extant general medical collection in China --- The Yellow Emperor's Cannon of Internal Medicine systematically expounded qigong's principles, training methods and the effects of qigong

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<sup>36</sup> This concept is also known as the micro-orbit or small heaven.

<sup>37</sup> My personal view on these discoveries is that they serve as proof that Qigong did exist a long time ago. In China there are many people who create new forms of Qigong based on what they think the inscriptions and writings mean. I feel that this is counter-productive. As our knowledge of ancient way of life is very limited, our attempt to understand writings of that time is at best guess work. Our language has also since changed.

derogation. For instance, "Remain nonchalant and void, then genuine Qi will follow; keep a sound mind, how can disease come on"; "exhale and inhale essence Qi, concentrate the spirit to keep a sound mind, the muscles and flesh unite as one"; "Those who suffer from a lingering kidney disease can face the south from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m., clear the mind of all stray thoughts, hold breath without respiration for seven times, swallow the breath by slightly craning the neck to send it down smoothly, just as swallowing very hard objects. Do this seven times. Gulp down the plenty of sublingual saliva".

Viewed from the development of the history of traditional Chinese medicine, doctors through the ages have paid great attention to qigong and had great attainments in qigong as well. In "Treatise on Febrile and Miscellaneous Diseases" written by Zhang Zhongjing (3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.), an outstanding physician of the Han Dynasty, there are records of employing qigong to treat diseases. For instance, "As soon as the limbs feel heavy and sluggish, resort to such treatments as Daoyin Tuna (expiration and inspiration), acupuncture and massage by rubbing with ointment so as not to allow the nine orifices to close up." His contemporary, renowned physician Hua Tuo, on the foundation of inheriting the ancient qigong and Daoyin, created a set of fitness exercises called "The Five-Animal Frolic"<sup>38</sup>. These exercises were designed to free circulation of the blood and the prevention of disease.

Ge Hong (see General Glossary), a renowned physician in the Eastern Jin Dynasty, held that the methods of Daoyin should be diversified. He pointed out in his book *Bao Puzi's Inner Treatise*<sup>39</sup>, "Flexing or stretching, bending or up-facing, or lying, leaning or standing, pacing or strolling, chanting or breathing, are all methods of Daoyin." He believed that the function of qigong is "to cure disease not

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<sup>38</sup> Also called "The Five-Animal Frolic". The animals are the tiger, the deer, the bear, and ape and the bird crane.

<sup>39</sup> Bao Puzi directly means "Embracing the Child". It is often used to mean "to return to the natural state".

yet contracted and dredge discordant Qi. Once it gets working, Qi will flow unimpeded everywhere." He also commented on applying exhalation and inhalation, expiration and inspiration to conducting Qi, which can keep in good health internally and eliminate pathogenic factors externally.

In the Ming Dynasty, the renewed physician and pharmacologist Li Shizhen (1518-1593) recorded in his "A Study on the Eight Extra Channels" that the inner scene and channels can be perceived clean and clear only by those who can see inwards." He also pointed out in his "Guidebook to Acupuncture and Moxibustion" that those who learn acupuncture and Moxibustion should practice will sitting exercises first, thus "in the human body the circulation of Qi and blood in the channels and the opening and closing of the functional activities of Qi can have a reliable foundation".

In recent years, there have also been many government-sponsored efforts on the promotion of Qigong in China. In 1955, China founded a Qigong sanatorium in the city of Tangshan in Hebei province. The clinical curative effect of Qigong was scientifically studies and documented. In 1956, training courses in Qigong were further set up successively in Tangshan and Beidaihe, Hebei Province. This course produced many of the Qigong practitioners from across the country. Grandmaster Hu Yaozhen was one of the sponsoring and teaching Qigong masters at this course. These efforts further helped lay the foundation for Qigong to be accepted in modern China.

## SUBSTANCE AND APPEARANCE

There are too many people who are more interested in the idea of a new concept, not in actually doing anything with it. It is becoming more of a fashion statement.

There are too many of us who are only interested in the appearance of Qigong and Taiji, not in the real thing, as in the fable of Mr. Ye and the Dragon. No wonder Wang Zongyue<sup>40</sup> said, "most people practice Taiji all their life without any understanding of the art."



A few years ago, I was invited to conduct a seminar on Chen Style Taijiquan<sup>41</sup> in eastern part of the United States. My usual sequence is to start the class with some warm up exercises and then as people are geared up and caught up to my particular ways of moving the body (there is a slightly different rhythm for each person and that always requires a bit of adapting to), I would stop and introduce the class and myself. As I was starting, the American host interrupted me. "Sorry Master Chen. But we have to bow in first!" As I was not familiar with this particular ritual, I asked the host to bow the class in. I followed him. We first bowed to the direction of the altar that has the grand master's portrait and the incense burner; then to the Sifu<sup>42</sup>; then the students to each other. While doing this, I noticed that every attendee of this seminar had a nice silk uniform on, though some were pyjamas. I was the only person who was wearing a T-Shirt and a pair of sweat pants! The next day, I came to the seminar wearing my silk uniform, which was given to me by a Taiji brother when I left China. I realize that the ritual associated with Taiji is of great importance to many Americans, while they are not so in China. I now have my

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<sup>40</sup> In his work "Taijiquan Treatise".

<sup>41</sup> An exercise and martial art system started in Chen Jiagou village in Henan Province, in central China. It is based on the principles of Daoism and is the original style of taijiquan.

<sup>42</sup> Cantonese way of saying Shifu. Mandarin speakers use Shifu.

studio decorated “very Chinese”, not because that is what the Chinese will do, rather because that is what Westerners will identify as Chinese.

There was once an Internet mailing list discussion that involved a seminar that I gave in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Many members of the mailing list were utterly disappointed and showed total suspicion on hearing that the presenter (that was me) spoke almost flawless English at the seminar. One person asserted that the presenter must be a charlatan who went to China for a weekend study.

We can see how easily these superficial appearances can deter us from learning the substance of authentic Chinese arts such as Qigong.

## QIGONG AND TAIJI

As Qigong is gaining popularity in recent years, many Taijiquan masters have miraculously turned themselves into Qigong masters overnight<sup>43</sup>. It must be understood clearly that though both Qigong and Taiji have strong roots in Daoism, and both follow similar principles, they are different disciplines.

氣功和太極

When I visited Pryor Kuang<sup>44</sup> of Laoshan in 1983, he said that the Daoist practice is about longevity with the use of the mind. Physical exercise was only a small portion of his discipline. He did Taiji and other physical exercises. But they were special exercises designed for Daoists to loosen up and rejuvenate the body. He referred to Taijiquan as a form of martial arts. There is a connection between Taijiquan and Daoism, much as all aspects of Chinese life are related, to some degree, to Daoism. There is no special connection there.

As a matter of fact, more Taiji masters employ the use of Yi Jing (the Book of Changes), a Confucian discipline, rather than the Dao De Jing. Grandmaster Hong Junsheng, a pure Chen Stylist, had the Yi Jing on his desk all his life.

The Chen Style Taijiquan founder Chen Wangting was said (in his Ode to Chen Taiji

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<sup>43</sup> This is not necessarily a bad thing. I, for one, am trying to do the same. As long as professionalism is maintained and real knowledge is sought after, learning a new discipline is not a betrayal.

<sup>44</sup> Kuang Changxiu. Daoist name Jueyuanzi. Also nicknamed "the One Qi Daoist". He was one of the most distinguished pryor in China at the time. In 1983, he was 80 years old and was in perfect health.



Boxing Manuals) to possess a copy of “the Huang Tingjing<sup>45</sup>” but the influence of this Daoist book on Chen Style has been negligible.

The use of Daoist and Qigong related vocabulary in the Chen Style and other styles<sup>46</sup> is as recent as with the 19<sup>th</sup> generation masters<sup>47</sup>.

The Hunyuantaiji system is the only Taijiquan system that seriously pursues Qigong as part of its curriculum<sup>48</sup>. This is so because the founder, Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang, is the inheritor of both Chen Style Taijiquan (from 17<sup>th</sup> generation Grandmaster Chen Fake) and Daoist Qigong (from Grandmaster Hu Yaozhen). With his knowledge of both systems, he incorporated them into one system. As master Zhang Yufei<sup>49</sup> puts it, “Grandmaster Feng returns the art of Taijiquan to its roots, which was Daoist Qigong.” Indeed, Grandmaster Feng has accomplished what Chen Wangting tried but did not succeed.

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<sup>45</sup> The Yellow Courtyard Cannon by Jin Dynasty female Daoist Wei Huacun. The book was divided into two volumes, “Outside Image” and “Inside Image”.

<sup>46</sup> Other styles of Taijiquan are Yang Style, Sun Style, Wu Style and Wu Hao Style.

<sup>47</sup> The 18<sup>th</sup> generation masters are Feng Zhiqiang (Beijing), Hong Junsheng (Jinan), Yang Xiaolou (Beijing), Chen Zhaoxu (Chen Fake’s eldest son), Chen Zhaokui (Chen Fake’s younger son), Chen Zhaopi (Chen Fake’s nephew who taught in Chen Village), Gu Liuxin (Shanghai), Li Jingwu (Bei Dai He), Lei Muni (Beijing), Tian Xiuchen (Beijing) and Xu Rusheng (Beijing). 19<sup>th</sup> generation masters are those disciples of the 18<sup>th</sup> generation masters listed above.

Prominent 19<sup>th</sup> generation masters are Chen Xiaowang, Chen Zhenglei, Wang Xian, Zhu Tiancai, Li Enjiu, Chen Qingzhou, Chen Quanzhong, Wu Shizong, Jiang Jiajun, Ma Hong, Zhang Zhijun and Chen Zhonghua.

<sup>48</sup> Sun Style Taijiquan founder Sun Lutang also tried to incorporate strong elements of his Xing Yi and Qigong practices into the Sun Style. Unfortunately, the Sun Style is rich in its theoretical heritage but has not produced as many high level practitioners who could verify the Qigong connection. There could be a host of reasons for this.

<sup>49</sup> Page 27 of the Premier issue of “Hunyuantaiji”. A Chinese language magazine published by Zhiqiang Wuguan, Beijing, in 1999.

## CHINESE CHARACTERS

As language is a product of the culture, it is necessary to look into the Chinese language in attempting to understand the Chinese culture. We are taking a brief tour into this topic, in areas related to Qigong.



Unlike English, the Chinese written language is made up of ideographs. They directly depict meaning. The smallest unit in the Chinese written language is called a radical, which can be a word independently or only as a radical to be used to make up other words. The radical carries meaning. For example, 木 is both a radical that indicates "wood" and a wood meaning tree. As you can see, 林 has two trees, thus means woods. 森 Has three trees and is used to mean "forest".

1. 息  
Xi (Breathing). This character is made up of two parts: one on top and the other one is at the bottom. The top radical is an independent word that means "self". The bottom radical is also an independent word. It means "heart". So we can conclude that breathing has to do with the heart moving by itself. Breathing, therefore, is the result of heartbeat and must be coordinated with the heartbeat in some manner.
2. 道  
Dao (way)  
The left side of the character means to walk. The right side of the character means head. This implies the mind is moving, not the body. In Daoism, it means that the Dao is reached by using the mind, not the physical body.
3. 德  
De (Ethics)

The left hand side is a radical that indicates "double persons", which gives us two people. The top of the right side is the radical for "ten". Below that is the radical for "four". So we have 16 persons altogether by now. Next we have the radical for "one", followed by the radical for "heart". Overall, this character means "sixteen people with one heart". Sixteen happens to be the weight measure for one *jin* (like pound).

4. 經

Jing (Cannon)

The left hand side is a radical for "silk", which is used to indicate book as words were written on the silk in antiquity. The right hand side is the radical that indicates a "sage". So "Cannon" is the words of the sage written on silk.

5. 聖

Sheng (Sage)

The top is made up of two radicals. The left is the radical for "ear" while the left is made up of the radical for "mouth". At the bottom is the radical for "King". From the way this word was made up, we can see that the ancients regarded a sage as someone who is the king who is wise (good at listening to others) and is good with words.

6. 仙

Xian, Immortal

On the left side is the radical for man. On the right is the radical for mountain. Therefore, the immortal is one who is a person living in the mountains.

7. 魂

Hun, Yang Spirit

On the left side is the radical for cloud. On the right side is the radical for ghost. This character denotes the Yang Spirit. There are two theories on this. One says that each person has two Spirits: one is Yin and one is Yang. The Yang Spirit lives in the Heart while the Yin Spirit lives in the Liver. When a person

dies, the Yang Spirit ascends to the Clear Land while the Yin Spirit descends to the Dark Land. The other theory believes that the Yin Spirit lives in women while the Yang Spirit lives in men.

8 魄

Po, Yin Spirit

On the left side is the radical for white. On the right side is the radical for ghost. This is the Yin Spirit. Please see explanation above.

9 混

Hun, Mix

On the left side is the radical for water. The right side is one character and also a radical, which was the name of the fish called Kun in Zhuang Zi's story about the whale and the roc.

10. 田

Tian, Field

The outside square looking radical indicates country, or border line. The inside radical that looks like a cross means ten. Together this character means a field. This is because during the slavery period in China thousands of years ago, the land was divided into this shape with the owner of the slaves living in the center.

## THE BOOK OF CHANGES

The Book of Changes (Yi Jing) is a general term for the concept of the Eight Diagrams (Bagua).

It was said that Fuxi received the He Tu (Picture of the River<sup>50</sup>). This was the earliest we can trace to the history of this book. There were no sources as to how he received it and from whom. The People of Xia Dynasty got the "Mountain Book of the Changes<sup>51</sup>". The Yellow Emperor obtained the Picture of the River. Later, the people of Shang Dynasty acquired the "Storehouse Book of Changes<sup>52</sup>". Lianshan received the Picture of the River. The people of Zhou Dynasty got hold of the "Zhou Book of Changes<sup>53</sup>". There are no records of any kind on the first two books. The only written records and discussions on the books are that of the Zhou Yi. Therefore, the latter Zhou Yi is what is commonly known as "The Book of Changes" today. All discussions on "The Book of Changes" refer to this book.

It is essentially a book of the Confucian order. It is one of the three Confucian Cannons<sup>54</sup>. It has also directed Qigong masters over the centuries because of the similarity of its principles to Daoism. The original meaning of Yi is a chameleon. The meaning "changes" is derived from the changes of colour of the chameleon. It was said that the book was used most dominantly as a study of fortune telling. To understand the book this way is to "use a cannon to kill mosquitoes."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> It was call a picture but in reality it was a chart.

<sup>51</sup> Lian Shan Yi.

<sup>52</sup> Guicang Yi.

<sup>53</sup> Zhou Yi.

<sup>54</sup> The three primary Confucian Cannons are: "The Book of Changes", "The Chronicles", and "The Cannon of the Rituals"

<sup>55</sup> Chinese idiomatic phrase, which means to use a powerful tool for an insignificant job.

In the ancient times King Baoxi ruled the land. He gazed into the heavens to study the constellations. He stared at the earth to find the laws of nature. He studied the language of the birds and animals and the geography of the land. He took from within, his own body and from afar, those of the animals and objects, to find out the nature of all things.

-Book of Changes: Xi Ci Zhuan

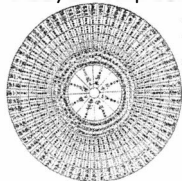
From the above quotation we know that “the Book of Changes” is on the subject of the Yin and Yang of the Heaven and Earth. It is a record of the natural laws of the universe and the laws that govern human life. This is the key to understanding “the Book of Changes”. Only when understood this way, “the Book of Changes” can lend us its wisdom and enlighten us.

The difficulty in understanding “the Book of Changes” lies in the composition of the book. It is made up of three components: language, numbers and charts<sup>56</sup>. Over the past several millenniums, it has been shown that those who were good at the language (Confucians) looked down upon numerical significance. Those who understood the numerical significance did not know the ancient language well enough. This has resulted in numerous erroneous explanatory notes attached to the book.

Another method in understanding “The Book of Changes” is that it offers whole new ways of thinking.

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<sup>56</sup> The following chart is an example of the Taiji changing into the 128 changes. Interestingly, the changes according to the book of changes are always 8, 32, 64, 128, and so on and so forth. This is strangely similar to today's computer processing bit sizes.



## **HOLISTIC THINKING**

It looks at Heaven, Earth and Man as one integral entity that is connected and is interdependent. Nothing is viewed in isolation. This has been the most difficult aspect in the learning of fortune telling for many in the past. The same scheme (Gua, the numbers cast in fortune telling) can be interpreted differently. The interpretation offered by the fortune-teller, appear to be totally arbitrary to the untrained eye.

"The Book of Changes" does not deal with an event on an individual basis. Instead, it puts the event in the context of the nature and of the society for analysis<sup>57</sup>.

## **DUALISTIC THINKING**

"The Book of Changes" believes that the dynamic process is made up of opposing forces. "One Yin and one Yang are the Dao." This opposing force, or tendency, is omnipresent from the entire universe as one entity to the smallest matter. Yang is the active, decisive, creative, strong, while Yin is passive, controlled, supporting, and soft. Yin and Yang are interdependent, complementary, and exchanging. When one reaches its peak, it will change to the other side<sup>58</sup>, just like the symbol of the Yin and Yang<sup>59</sup>. Over

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<sup>57</sup> This reminds me of an incident of the opposite. In 1991, a Western psychologist came to my school, a public school in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, to give a workshop for a group of students. I was interested in the topic and the activity and decided to come to experience it. Dr. M was a famed PH.D from a California university and has a method develop to determine people's interest, personality and learning style. These were hot issues at the time. My experience involved filling out a questionnaire. She told me that I had "bad temper" based on my selection of the red color in the color section. I immediately realized that it was a cultural biased questionnaire that did not have any merit in my case. Red was supposed to indicate "hot temper" for the doctor but for me, red meant happiness from my Chinese upbringing. You can see from this example, events cannot be viewed in a static way. The same selection of the same color could mean different things to different people, under different circumstances.

<sup>58</sup> This concept is the central principle that requires the application of "appropriateness" as stated by Wang Zongyue in the Taijiquan Treatise.

<sup>59</sup> One of the original Taiji symbols had the Yin and Yang change gradually like this:

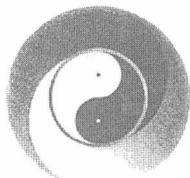
the centuries, this dualistic view became the guiding principle of Chinese culture, philosophy and thinking.

### **IMAGERY THINKING**

"The Book of Changes" uses the image of objects to refer to the nature of those objects, their underlining principles and their relationships with nature and with humans. This is a unique method to "the Book of Changes". This method is used to enlighten people and to directly connect people to events. This thinking process does not exclude other methods such as logic, reasoning, analysis, induction, deduction and summarization. It is an addition to those common methods.

### **NUMERIC CODES**

The symbols used in "the Book of Changes" such as \_ \_ \_\_, are part of a complete system of describing the entire universe composed of coded numeric symbols. This is the earliest codification of reality. This system is similar to today's binary codes<sup>60</sup>. The difference is: the computer binary language seeks to describe the complexity with the most simply binary codes while the "The Book of Changes" seeks to reduce the complex universe and its process into the simplest binary code. They are opposite but the same.



<sup>60</sup> As a matter of fact, the first computer language was enlightened by the very "the Book of Changes".



## DAO DE JING

### LANGUAGE

The book was written in ancient language. It can only be read over and over again to savour and experience the meaning contained. It cannot be interpreted. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was great anthropologist in China named Guo Moruo<sup>61</sup>. It was said that he was called to the discovery site of the turtle bone writings. He made notes of the writings and then went back to his office to continue his research. Later, he went to Japan for further studies<sup>62</sup>. During his spare time, he wrote all the turtle bone writings out on paper from memory and contemplated on them for many years before finally deciphering them. This example shows the importance of having first hand material and direct interpretation. If he had to work with a review or somebody's idea of what the turtle bone writings were, he would not have succeeded in deciphering them. In respect to our subject, one must have access to the original unedited, unchanged version of the Dao De Jing, in order to have a direct understanding of it.

Because of the distance between the author and the reader<sup>63</sup>, many notes were written for the text in order to assist readers. These explanatory notes appear to be useful tools but in reality, gradually have led to misunderstanding of the original meaning of Lao Zi.

In this respect, translations can only be understood as introductions or reviews to the original text. It is next to

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<sup>61</sup> He also was one of the most learned intellectuals, who served the Chinese Communist Party of Mao.

<sup>62</sup> Many Chinese scholars and military talents went to Japan at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to gain more western and advanced knowledge. This included most of the top officials of the Communist Party and the Nationalist Party. Mao Zedong was one of the few exceptions.

<sup>63</sup> Here I mean the distance in time and the distance in understanding of the subject.

impossible to try to learn and understand the meaning of Dao De Jing<sup>64</sup> through translated texts.

Let's look at the beginning of the text of Dao De Jing:

Dao Ke Dao Fei Chang Dao Ming Ke Ming Fei Chang

Ming

The direct word for word translation is:

Dao OK Dao Not Ordinary Dao Name OK Name Not Ordinary Name

Of course these words in their special way of word order do not convey a particular meaning to the eyes of the English language speaker. This is because English is based on a logical grammatical structure. On the contrary, the Chinese language is directly based on the meaning of the characters in their physical shape. One cannot truly understand the psyche of the English-speaking people unless he understands the logic and grammar of the language. In the same way, one cannot understand the Chinese psyche unless he understands the Chinese language as meaning directly from the characters.

Let's not worry about the meaning of the above sentence. Let's now turn our attention to the following:

A way can be a guide, but not a fixed path;

Names can be given, but not permanent labels<sup>65</sup>

I will not comment on the precision of the translation by Cleary. I will, instead, give you an example. When I was teaching high school in Canada, I was given the honourable task of teaching a course called CALM. It is the abbreviation for Career and Life Management Studies. In this course, there was a unit on Sex Education. When students asked me to explain to them what an orgasm was like, I told them that it was a feeling that is not parallel to anything else in life. One had to experience it. Those who have experienced it will not have a need to hear others describe it. Those who do not

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<sup>64</sup> There are three most important classics in the Daoist tradition. They are *Dao De Jing*, *Nan Hua Jing* (Also called *Zhuang Zi*), and *Wen Shi Jing*.

<sup>65</sup> This is a translation of the first two lines of Dao De Jing by Thomas Cleary.

the description is. Well, the students were not happy with my answer. They went to another teacher. This teacher is of the type with quick wit (shall I also add that it is not parallel to intelligence). She told them it was like sneezing. So for several months, the teenagers in my classes kept on sneezing very liberally in class and out of class. While the sneezing analogy was a good teaching tool, the students thought they understood the meaning of the word, but they did not!

I am not totally writing off the usefulness of translated versions, for they help promote the idea of Lao Zi to more people. It is a huge and important task to bring more and more people to the fold of Lao Zi.

### **PUNCTUATION**

The book was written without punctuation. The Chinese written language is made up of characters<sup>66</sup>. Each individual character has an independent meaning. Characters then link together to form words, and phrases and sentences. The original “Dao De Jing” had no punctuation<sup>67</sup>, nor sentence endings, nor stanzas, nor paragraphs, nor sections. All these demarcations that severely damage and change the original meaning, were added later on.

Let’s look at the beginning part of the book that we quoted earlier:

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<sup>66</sup> Please refer to the section on “Notes on Chinese Characters” towards the end of the book for some further details.

<sup>67</sup> This is true to all classic Chinese writing. Punctuation was not introduced till the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is mainly a borrowed concept from the West. A Chinese saying goes like this, “If you can’t even figure out where to put punctuation when you read, how can you claim to know anything at all?” The first step in learning classic Chinese is to study all the individual words. Then you try to group them to form phrases. Then sentences. Then compare the context of the sentences to see if your period (makes a sentence) is in the right place. Only after that, you can read the whole text and understand the meaning. This process appears to be quite tedious and cumbersome but in fact, it is quite simple for the people who learn it that way.

## Dao Ke Dao Fei Chang Dao Ming Ke Ming Fei Chang Ming

- If we punctuate it this way:  
Dao Ke Dao, Fei Chang Dao; Ming Ke Ming, Fei Chang Ming  
Then the meaning is:  
The Dao that can be called the Dao, is not the ordinary Dao;  
the name that can be named, is not the ordinary name.
- On the other hand, if we punctuate it slightly differently:  
Dao Ke, Dao Fei, Chang Dao; Ming Ke, Ming Fei, Chang Ming  
The meaning becomes:  
Dao is OK; Dao is not OK. This is the ordinary Dao;  
Name is OK; name is not OK; this is the ordinary name.

It is not important to find out which of the above two ways of punctuating the sentences is correct. The reader must go through such a process to have his/her own understanding of the original text. He/she must play with the text the same way the people in the last 2,600 years played with it. Only this way, he/she can have equal, or deeper understanding of it. This privilege and process are deprived if one reads a translated text. The beauty and merit of the text is that it is open to many interpretations.

# HUNYUAN QIGONG

In this chapter, I will go over the nuts and bolts of Qigong that include the origin, basic physical requirements, Zhanzhuang and 4 of the moves in Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang's 12-form Hunyuan Qigong set.



Hunyuan is the state of affairs before the universe was created. To call a system of Qigong the Hunyuan system is a lofty idea. As a matter of fact, many people have made the same claim. There are several Mandarin Chinese books in China claiming to teach a version of Hunyuan Taiji<sup>68</sup>. However, Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang did not simply stake out such a wild claim because the terminology precedes all others. In his system, the practitioner actually seeks the state of Hunyuan, i.e. the primordial state before the "Big Bang". We seek this state in ourselves through Qigong cultivation.

Why do we do this? Normally, we would agree that everything is always in a constant flux of change. This change, by nature, is towards something more logical, more progressive, and for most part, better. If this is true, then why are we seeking something that is pre-civilization, pre-life, and pre-universe? To answer this question, we go back to the definition of Dao.

Dao is the regularity that governs everything, including the formation of the universe. Dao pre-dates the universe and it will be there when this universe is long gone. How can we peek into the nature of Dao if we don't go back and find out the evidence of its work?

So we go back (in standing meditation "Zhanzhuang") to the Hunyuan state. Wait there. We are in a non-being state.

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<sup>68</sup> Such as "Taiji Hunyuan Gong" by Liu Xuyin.

In Hunyuan Qigong, we call this the state of "forgetting self and everything else around self". The universe does not exist. I do not exist. This is the pre-dawn state. This is Wuji. We do nothing. Thought ceases to exist in the mind. Movement does not exist. This is the eternal stare (as in Laozi's reference to long life). Am I staring into the universe and beyond? Is the universe staring into me? When this state is maintained for a long time, then suddenly, something starts moving. I do not know what it is. I do not know its direction. My mind is not stirred. I am not thinking. My mind is firmly grounded. But somehow an idea came. It did not come to me but I know its meaning. It is like telepathy. I just know. I know it is something like light smoke rising into the heavens above. It has a beautiful color but I cannot describe it. It has the most pleasant fragrance but I have no words to depict it. I just know. I know that it curls up in a spiral. It starts in the abyss of my Dantian and ascends right into my heart. Where it started is where everything started. It is part of me but it is not. It is my Dantian but really it is not physically on me. This mysterious movement settles down in my heart. My heart is blessed. It is nurtured. I feel like an infant in its mother's embrace. All is well. All is safe. There is only warmth and pleasantries. My mind is awake but I am asleep.

This light smoke is the one-grain. It is the seed<sup>69</sup> that we seek. It is the beginning of all true Qi. It is more than a feeling. It is real, more real than what is real around us.

From a practical perspective, Hunyuan is the fusion of circles and spirals. Everything in the universe is made up of circles. The universe was started from a single point (which would be a dot or a small circle) and is expanding in all directions (which means it is a larger circle or ball). When you give the circle a length, you have a spiral or a sphere.

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<sup>69</sup> In ancient Daoist practices, this is called the true seed. Many people wasted their lives pursuing Qi cultivation without gaining the Qi because there is no true seed. The ability to start the seed in the body, therefore, becomes paramount to Qigong practitioners. It has always been kept as a secret as to how to start up this seed.

The universe is made up as such so it is in reality a mixture of circles.

In our daily life, what is not made up of, or powered by circles and circular motion? Gravity of Earth is partially due to the rotation of the Earth. We have the different seasons in a year because the Earth moves around the Sun in circular motion. We have the months because of the Moon circling around the Earth. Planes are powered by turning engines. So are boats and cars. Human power comes from the turning of the joints.

If we look at all the circular motions of everything, we realize that everything moves (circles) according to a prescribed tract or orbit. So there are movements and there are controls. If we move in circular ways and move according to the regularities, we are one with the Dao. Humans have successfully done so in the past. All the great achievements of the past, that endured that test of time, followed this way of thinking. Calendars were designed this way. Machines are designed this way. Now we have to live our lives this way to make it work better. This is Hunyuan Qigong.

Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang is the creator of the Hunyuan Qigong system. He is a famous contemporary martial artist in China with over 60 years of training in many arts including Xinyi Liuhe<sup>70</sup>, Tongbei<sup>71</sup> and Taiji. His two main masters were Chen Fake (pronounced Fah Ker) and Hu Yaozhen. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chen and Hu were two of the most prominent martial artist in Beijing. Chen taught him that art of Chen Style Taijiquan. Hu taught him that art of Xinyi and Qigong. By the 1950s, Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang was already known in Beijing martial art world as the "Big Eyed Tiger". In the early 1970s, Beijing had this martial proverb: "Tian Xiuchen's neutralization; Chen Zhaokui's qinna and Feng Zhiqiang's power!"<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> The Heart and Mind Six Harmonies style of martial art.

<sup>71</sup> Also known as the White Ape style of martial art.

<sup>72</sup> All these three were disciples of the famed Chen Fake. Tian Xiuchen was the first in the communist China during that time to teach professionally in the parks of Beijing. It was said that his neutralization ability is so high that

Although famous, Grandmaster Feng was only an amateur in a technical sense. He did not teach Taiji full time. He was working first as an apprentice and then eventually a manager of a workshop in the Beijing Electrical Mortar Manufacture Corporation. Work and many years of national natural calamities, and political turmoil took its toll on him. When he retired in 1980, he was laden with sicknesses of all kinds.

He set out to heal himself. He went to the Temple of Heaven Park and restarted his Qigong program that he had learned from his master Hu Yaozhen. In the winter of 2000, Grandmaster Feng took me to Tiantan (Temple of Heaven) and showed me all the sites he used to practice at. Indeed those places had the best of Fengshui. There was a spot in the northern part of the park where he used to do Zhanzhuang for hours among the hundred of pine trees. The centuries old trees give a special breath of life to the spot. At one time, there were 300 people in that area practicing Zhanzhuang with Feng. Miraculously, after about a year, he cured himself. The pains in the body from 40 years of hard labour in the factory were gone. The heart came back to normal state. The cholesterol level came down to normal. By then there was such a demand for him in the parks that he had to flee from spot to spot. Whenever he stayed in one spot for more than half an hour, there will be a huge crowd around him. People from all over China wanted to ask questions of this famous master. It was a memorable moment to be shown all those "sacred" spots in the Tiantan Park by Grandmaster Feng.

Today there was still a large crowd of people in that park practicing his art. They are now under the tutelage of his daughter, maser Feng Xiuqian. The legacy continues.

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no one can seize him during a match. Chen Zhaokui was Chen Fake's young son. He specialized in the art of qinna, or joint locking and seizing. Feng Zhiqiang was Chen's last disciple. He was known for his ability to issue power. He was often likened to a tiger. Everyone in Beijing was afraid of his legendary fist.



While studying from both Chen Fake and Hu Yaozhen, Feng already saw the trend that the art of the two were to combine. But it was not meant for Chen's generation. Chen and Hu were two of the best friends. They were so like-minded that in 1953 they co-founded the one time famous "The Capital Wushu Research Association". There was never any mention of their discussions on Taiji and Qigong. They were never seen comparing their two different styles. But Feng saw from learning that they were both at a level that they spoke the same language and talked about the same core issues. For example, Chen Fake used to say to his disciples that when he did the Chen Taijiquan form, he felt that there was a little tornado inside his body. This was a sign of high level Qi activity in him. No wonder his Taiji ability became so drastically higher than the rest of the Chen Style Taijiquan people in his native village.

Taking the essence of each of his masters, Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang synthesized a form called Hunyuan Taiji. The full title is: Chen Style Xinyin Hunyuan Taijiquan System. This system encompasses both Taijiquan and Qigong practices. In his design, he had in mind both the martial art and health concerns of people. The philosophy of the Hunyuan Taiji system is to practice with an emphasis on nurturing the Qi.

This philosophy has its roots in ancient practices. The ancients said, "The heaven has three treasures of the Sun, the Moon and the Stars. The Earth has three treasures of the water, fire and soil. Humans also have three treasures. They are Jing, Qi and Shen.

Jing is the original Jing, not the Jing that one is born with from parents. Qi is the original Qi, not the Qi of breathing. Shen is the original Shen, not the Shen of thinking and reasoning. When the three treasures of the human body are harmed, the body will bear disease. When the three treasures are exhausted, the life is ended. When the Jing is full, the Qi is full. When the Qi is full, the Shen does not bear any weaknesses. Shen is built on the basis of Qi. Qi exists because of Shen. Shen and Qi are born from each other.

Jing, Qi and Shen are interdependent and are in essence one of the same.



Qi is in the human body. The source of Qi is earth and heaven. It is given through the parents. The Qi of earth and heaven is called the True Qi. The Qi given by the parents is called the Original Qi. This Qi is also termed Early Heaven Qi. When the fetus comes into this world, the umbilical cord was cut and the Qi is kept inside the infant's body. This Qi reaches out to all parts of the body but is centered on the Dantian. This is the Qi that Hunyuan Qigong uses for practice.

We must use our mind, our hearing and our sense of touch to nurture this Qi. This is the Original Seed. The method of nurturing this Qi is no other than the cultivation of our mind and body.

The sense of vision must be returned to the inside of Dantian. The sense of hearing must be closed. This way the Shen and the Qi will stay together and bind together. The heart and the breathing will become one. Each breath will go deep to its root.

During childhood, the seven emotions could not bother him. The different gains and flavours have not corrupted him. His three treasures are still intact. When he reaches adulthood, his activities in the eyes, ears nose mouth tongue and mind increase dramatically. His three treasures are now affected. Eventually, his three treasures will be harmed (sickness) and depleted (death).

To keep the three treasures intact is the right path to immortality. One needs to nurture the Original Qi for ten years. If the Original Qi is not nurtured, it will be harmed. A natural way of life is the path to death. It must be reversed to gain immortality. After ten years of correct Hunyuan Qigong practice, the three treasures will bind together to form a solid ball. This is called the One-Grain of Hunyuan Qi. This is the essence of life. It is a refined essence. This Qi is strong and can last much longer than the normal Qi in the body of people who do not cultivate.

## PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

要求

Proper physical alignment will foster easier flow of energy in the body. Overall, the physical requirement of Qigong is identical to that of Taiji exercises<sup>73</sup>. At the highest level when Qi flows, body alignment or body posture is no longer relevant. At the beginning level, however, one must have proper postures in order to encourage the Qi flow. These requirements are the rules for Qigong exercises.

### THE HEAD: UPRIGHT

The head area is where the Spirit<sup>74</sup> (Shen) lives. It is the upper palace. It must be suspended and erect all the time in order to ensure that it is at the highest point of the body. The nose touches a wall (imagined) while the chin is pulled towards the throat and is pulled downwards. This motion forces the neck to straighten up. But this is not enough; you must also imagine that the neck touches the collar of the shirt. This further straightens out the neck. The Baihui Point (top of head) must be aligned with the Hui Yin Point (bottom of crotch).

### THE MAGPIE BRIDGE: CONNECTED

The magpie bridge refers to the connection between the head and the rest of the body. Physically, there is no pathway for Qi to travel from the top of the head down to the lower body. There is a gap between the nose area and the throat. The method for bridging this gap is by putting the tongue on area between the upper teeth and the roof of the mouth. The touching must be light and constant.

The second function of the move is to encourage the production of saliva<sup>75</sup> in the mouth.

### THE CHEST: HOLLOW

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<sup>73</sup> Please see the chapter in this book on Qigong and Taiji to distinguish between them.

<sup>74</sup> Spirit is the non-physical form of Qi.

<sup>75</sup> Saliva is an important body fluid as precious as sperm is.

The chest is where the heart sits. It must be hollowed. Lao Zi advocated, "the hollowing of the heart and the solidifying of the belly." In breathing, the chest is filled with air when inhaling. It is emptied when exhaling.

### **THE SHOULDERS: RELAXED**

The shoulders help keep the chest empty so they must be dropped at all times. The shape of the shoulders must be rounded with the part touching the neck as the highest point. The outer shoulder the lowest point. At one time in history (Tang Dynasty) drooping shoulders among women was a sign of beauty.

### **THE ELBOW: DOWN**

The elbow must be sunk at all times. It should always be lower than the shoulder and then hand. The tip of the elbow must point at the floor.

### **THE WRIST: BENT**

The wrist must be relaxed and bent all the time. When making a fist, the wrist area becomes straight. It must then quickly be released into a relaxed and bent position. If there is tension on the wrist, Qi will not flow to fingertips.

### **THE LOWER BACK: STRAIGHT**

This is an area with most problems for Qigong practitioners. The lower back area appears to be curved under normal circumstances. This is not true<sup>76</sup>. The curve has much to do with bad body posture during growing up years and cultural bias. By this I mean culturally, men desire women with curved lower backs.

If you lie supine on a hard surface you will find a big gap between your lower back and the hard surface. Try to push your lower back down on the surface.

The correct lower back position also has to do with the direction of the coccyx and the ability to open the Dantian.

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<sup>76</sup> I have had many conversations with people of various professions. The common view is that the lower back should be curved.

### **THE KNEES: UP AND DOWN**

The knees must always be slightly bent. The movement of the knees are up and down. The knees cannot sway sideways. This applies whenever one is in an erect position. In my years of teaching, I find that this is the number one problem for all learners. The upper and lower body will not work together when the knees are not relaxed and bent. When the upper and lower body don't work together, Qi will not flow and many physical deformities will occur<sup>77</sup>.

### **THE COCCYX: PUSH DOWN**

The most important point about the coccyx is that it must point downwards like a plummet. Different styles of Qigong require it to point to different directions. The Hunyuan Qigong system requires that the coccyx points straight downward, making the hips tuck down towards the front of the body. This encourages the Qi flow in the small heaven circle.

There are also systems that require the coccyx to point down backwards.

All in all, the downward pulling motion of the coccyx will help straighten the spine while the head is suspended. A straight spine can be relaxed and can further encourage Qi flow.

### **THE DANTIAN: CENTER**

The Dantian refers to the Middle Dantian. It is the one<sup>78</sup> that is in the abdominal region, 3 inches<sup>79</sup> below the navel and 3 inches inside the surface of the navel.

When practicing solo Qigong exercises, the Dantian is always the center of the body. The outer body, the limbs, can rotate around the Dantian in a 3 dimensional manner.

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<sup>77</sup> This refers to the non-compliance to rules of the physical body.

<sup>78</sup> There are 5 Dantians in all: the upper Dantian, Middle Dantian, Lower Dantian, Front Dantian and Rear Dantian.

<sup>79</sup> Traditionally an inch is the distance between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> knuckle of the middle finger of the person using the term, or the term is being used on.

## ZHANZHUANG

*Stand firm on an eight  
Hold fast on the arch  
Center like a paper lantern  
Head like a palace in the sky  
Lean on the flag post  
Hip sitting on high chair  
Pulled by a million silk  
Don't see the target  
Like riding the dragon in cloud  
Foot afloat on water*

站  
桩

When standing in the Zhanzhuang posture, the feet should be shoulder width apart. The positions of the feet should be like this: \ /. This configuration looks like the Chinese character for eight, thus the say standing firm on an eight. Many say that the feet should be parallel to each other. This may be a good idea but in reality, it is too hard to do. Doing so will in effect restrict movement of the knees.



The crotch area should be an arch like that of a bridge. The crotch should be fairly high as in a high horse stand. The Kua (crease line between thigh and bottom of torso) should be considerably higher than the knees. This is the first arch. The arms should be placed in front of the chest with the two hands almost touching each other. The elbow should be bend and the shoulders must be pulled down. This will create the second arch.

The Dantian and the chest should be totally hollow. This means that the spine is stretched and the back slightly bent forward. This posture will make the inside of the body (the center) hollow. You can imagine that the inside is so hollow that you can put a candle in it without burning anything around it.

The head is suspended higher than the rest of the body. It stands aloof like a Chinese palace above everything. This will further balance the body and give an axis to it.



The back is kept straight. This includes the lower back and the entire spine. In doing so, the neck part must also be straight as part of the spine. At this time, try to imagine that the neck is leaning against a flag post. This will make it straight. The two difficult places on the spine are where the lower back is where the neck is.

When the Dang (area from knee to back then to other knee) is round and the coccyx pulled down, you will feel as if sitting on a barstool. The sensation to look for is that you are sitting on it but not really sitting since the barstool is not a comfortable chair. By doing this, your body is already properly structured for Qigong.

At this time imagine that there are millions of little strings like silk tied to all parts of your body. They are all pulling away from you. This makes your body expand. As all strings are pulling at the same time, at the same speed and at the same intensity, you do not lose your balance.

You have your head upright. Look straight ahead of you. Imagine you are looking into a 3-D picture. You stare, then lose focus. At this time, another focus comes into view. You see things that are not physically there. You see the space between objects real while the objects become blurred. You lose the target of your vision and see something else.

You start to feel light-headed, as if riding on clouds. This is not the same as your usual dizziness. It is a feeling of freedom. You feel light, but you are not disoriented. You feel light, because the body is filled with Qi. You feel light, because you are as though standing afloat on water. You are that light.

The three components of Zhanzhuang are: **posture**, **breathing** and **thinking**. I have not forgotten the latter two components. They are intentionally left out. This is because there should be no breathing or thinking. Let me tell you how this can be done. Once you know how, you must also remember that they must be practiced in a gradual manner.

Breathing is done with the nose and mouth. When you inhale, you use your nose. When you exhale, you use your mouth. The ancients said that when inhaling, you must not make any sounds with your nose. This means you must inhale very slowly. After inhaling, you must also hold your breath for a while. For how long do you hold your breath? It depends on your lung capacity. Anyway, you should not feel stifled, or out of breath.

When exhaling, put something (like a fine feather) in front of your mouth. Exhaling should be fast. You can open your mouth wide. But you must ensure that the feature in front of your mouth does not move when you exhale. This ensures that the exhaling is not restricted.

What does not mean and what are the functions of this breathing practice? What you are trying to do is to match your breathing effort to that of the body movements. By body movements I mean the body parts that are normally involved in breathing: the nose, the mouth, the chest, the lungs and the stomach. You want all but the stomach to be used in breathing. All others must not be used, nor felt during the process.



The crucial point in this is slow, proportional, long, full and effortless. When these are achieved, you will realize that the stomach does not do much work. Eventually you will be able to breathe from the Dantian, not your nose, mouth, throat, or chest. It is only when the Dantian is employed, that



you will start experiencing real reversed breathing, Dantian breathing, deep breathing and breathing to the foot (described by Zhuang Zi).

Later on, you will not breathe at all. The stomach will breathe you! This sounds odd but is what will happen. This is the path to great achievement in Qigong. When you use your mind-intent to control and direct the body to do Qigong, you are working at the normal secular pace. You can become better and healthier but cannot achieve greatness? Great achievements appear to be impossible for the average person. You must let the stomach do the breathing for you to double your result with half the effort.

What is stomach breathing? It is when breathing becomes automatic. You can actually see with your own eyes that the navel is being pulled into the stomach, almost touching the Mingmen and then bounces back. It is amazing because you cannot control it. You cannot start it or stop it. It will work on its own. When this happens, the automatic pump in your body is activated. You are in business. You are on the path to the Dao.

The progression of Zhanzhuang practice should be 15 minutes, 30 minutes and then 45 minutes. In rare cases, a person needs to practice several hours at one setting. For the amateur, 45 minutes are the recommended length of practice.

To stand there in this posture with the arms stretched out in front of your chest (though in a half circle with the palms facing the body) is no easy job. Your arms will be sore after a few minutes. Use the stretching imagery to help you overcome this. Try to slightly stretch open each and every joint in your body, starting with the joints on your arms.

The body pains are not the most difficult to conquer. After a while, you will develop the physical muscles and readjustment of physical alignment to counter all this.

The real difficulty lies with the mind. The ancients called the mind "Monkey". It indeed is like the money. It is always busy. It is very difficult to settle down. The term

“going into tranquility” specifically refers to the tying down of the mind monkey.

How do we do this? My experience (based on Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang’s teachings) tells me that it is a process of gradual change. When you try to go into tranquility, your mind actually becomes more active. All your previous years’ of experiences, good or bad, will flash in front of you like movies.

First, you must replace your myriads of thoughts with the Three Xings (sense of vision, sense of hearing and sense of touching). You try to see the Dantian; you try to hear it and you try to feel it. When you attempt these Three Xings, you drop your eyelids; close your ears and forget your body. Your eyes should not be closed shut. If your eyes are totally closed shut, you will see black spots in your mind’s eye. This is not good. Bad visions (ghosts and evil spirits) will enter your mind.

You imagine that the Dantian is like a red Sun inside your stomach area. You imagine you can hear the burning sound (like a hiss) of this “Sun”. You can feel its heat. The color red is used in your imagination because this causes heat to generate in your Dantian. The ancients called this process “dropping the heart down to the well”.

Second, you must try to feel and experience the movement of the Dantian. By this time, the Three Xings have returned to Dantian. This will cause the Dantian to contract and expand. Heat is also generated in the Dantian. Now your mind will be focused on feeling and experience the movement of the Dantian. When you can do this, you have successfully changed your mind’s work from myriads of things to three and then to one. The ancients called this the ability to look at the inner sceneries.

Third, At this point, you try to let go of the things you “see” in your stomach. They are all illusions. When you stop seeing these inner sceneries, you are into Wuji.

Zhanzhuang is the pinnacle of Qigong practice. It is the equivalent of Sitting Meditation. It is the simplest in terms of physical movements and requirements. It is the most difficult in terms of accomplishments.

## GATHER THE QI TO THE THREE DANTIAN

### 三丹采气

This exercise<sup>80</sup> is designed to: 1) gather the natural QI from the natural environment; 2) nurture the early heaven QI in the body; 3) train towards heaven, man and earth combine into one. This exercise is practiced according to upper DANTIAN, Middle DANTIAN and Lower DANTIAN.

#### 1. Upper DANTIAN Gathering QI

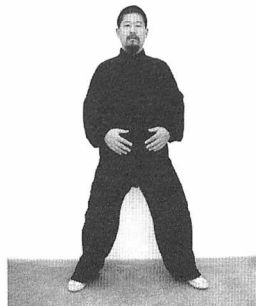
##### Movement



2-1



2-2



2-3

- ❖ Double Hands Upper Gather (2-1)  
Starting from WUJI posture. The hands part and rise along the side of the body.
- ❖ Close Hands to Gather and Inhale (2-2)  
The hands close in front of the ZUQIAO (roughly in between the eyebrows) and use the Zuqiao to gather the early heaven Hunyuan QI into it.

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<sup>80</sup> The four Qigong exercises described here are from Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang's 12-form Hunyuan Qigong. In order for consistency, photos are numbered the same way as in that book.

- ❖ Return the Qi to the Dantian (2-3)  
From ZUQIAO enter the QI into Upper DANTIAN (Niwangong), along the middle of the body go down to the middle DANTIAN.  
Repeat this procedure 9 times.

### **Mind-Intent**

- ❖ The eyes and mind lead the hands to gather the QI from heaven and earth.
- ❖ The gathered QI enters from ZUQIAO and lowers down to middle DANTIAN.

### **Key Points**

- ❖ When gathering QI, the eyes and mind must combine with hand movements. The hands must travel from far to near and let the QI enter into middle DANTIAN gradually.
- ❖ When the QI enters the DANTIAN, pause before the next move.
- ❖ Forget about breathing with your mouth. Go naturally.

### **Hints**

- ❖ The mind is carrying the QI of heaven and earth into the body through the upper DANTIAN, which is ZUQIAO. The QI combines with the YUANSHEN (original soul) and goes down to the middle DANTIAN. This way, the after heaven QI and the early heaven QI mix and become one. On the way the QI goes down to the DANTIAN, the mind should be thinking about the QI's path, gazing at the QI, and listening to the QI. This is called the soul goes down and the spirits go up.

### **Function**

- ❖ Nurture and strengthen DANTIAN HUNYUAN QI.
- ❖ Enhance metabolism

- ❖ Increase the oxygen in the blood system.
- ❖ Enlarge lung capacity.
- ❖ Improve organ functions.
- ❖ Help opening up the REN MAI meridian.
- ❖ Improve the Cai, An, Center Equilibrium and HUNYUAN Posture.

## **2. Middle DANTIAN Gathering QI**

### **Movement**

- ❖ Double-Hand Frontal Gathering of the Qi (2-4)

Continue from last movement. Both hands relax and naturally drop. From outside of the waist closing in front of the body at waist height.

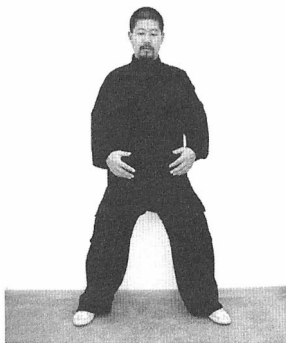
- ❖ Double-Hand Gather and Exhaling (2-5)  
Both hands gradually come back to the navel area. Pause.  
Repeat this 9 times.

### **Mind-Intent**

- ❖ Gathering the QI and collecting the QI  
Eyes and spirit lead the hands to gather the QI from earth and heaven.
- ❖ Channeling the QI to DANTIAN  
QI goes to DANTIAN directly through the navel.



2-4



2-5

### **Key Points**

- ❖ When gathering and collecting, eyes and mind-intent (spirit) must coordinate with the hand motion; from far to near; from outside to inside; gathering while collecting; channeling while gathering and collecting.
- ❖ When completing one cycle of gathering and collecting the QI to the DANTIAN, pause the hands at the DANTIAN before continuing on.
- ❖ Forget about breathing. You will breathe naturally.

### **Hints**

- ❖ In your mind, you must gather all the QI from earth and heaven into your DANTIAN. Your DANTIAN is like a reservoir, it gathers but does not leak. This is called "charging the DANTIAN." The QI from earth and heaven will mix with your original QI in the DANTIAN, becoming one.

### **Function**

- ❖ Nurture and strengthen the HUNYUAN QI in DANTIAN.

- ❖ The collecting and relaxing movements of DANTIAN will encourage the physical movements of the lower stomach, thus massaging the stomach and intestines, and enhancing the digestive activities and creating more fluids in the gallbladder, spleen, stomach and intestines. This will enhance digestive abilities of the body thus taking in more nutrients from foods. This will also enhance metabolism and the ability to internally cleanse.
- ❖ Nurture CAI, Middle Winding and HUNYUAN Post of the Taiji 13 postures.

## THE THREE-DANTIAN OPEN AND CLOSE

# 三丹开合

This exercise is used to train the resonating of internal power; seeking tranquility among movements; and inside outside becoming one. There are three parts in this exercise: upper, middle and lower DANTIAN exercises.

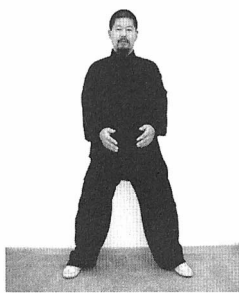
### Movement



4-1



4-2



4-3

### 1. Upper DANTIAN Open and Close

- ❖ Two Hands Face Each Other (4-1)  
From the WUJI position put both hands in front of the chest. Make the palms face each other. The distance between the two hands should be roughly shoulder width. Focus eyes on an imaginary line that links the two LAOGONG<sup>81</sup>.
- ❖ Two Hands Open (4-2)  
Continue from last movement. The two LAOGONG open as though pulling away from each other. Imagine the two hands are tied up together with an elastic string.
- ❖ Two Hands Close (4-1)  
Two hands press back to each other as though

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<sup>81</sup> This refers to the point in the center of the palm.



squeezing a balloon.

Repeat the above open and close motion 18 times.

## 2. Middle DANTIAN Open and Close



4-4

- ❖ Place the two hands in front of the stomach. They should face each other (4-3)  
Continue from the last move and loosen the two hands down to the front of the navel. Pause. Eyes focus on the line between LAOGONG of the two hands.
- ❖ Two Hands Open (4-4)  
Continue from last movement. The two LAOGONG open as though pulling away from each other. Imagine the two hands are tied up together with an elastic string.
- ❖ Two Hands Close (4-3)  
Two hands press back to each other as though squeezing a balloon.  
Repeat the above open and close motion 18 times.

### 3. Lower DANTIAN Open and Close



4-5



4-6

- ❖ Two Hands Face Each Other in Front of HUIYIN (4-5)  
Continue from last move. Two hands loosen down to the front of the HUIYIN. Pause. Eyes focus on the line between the LAOGONG.
- ❖ Two Hands Open (4-6)  
Continue from last movement. The two LAOGONG open as though pulling away from each other. Imagine the two hands are tied up together with an elastic string.
- ❖ Two Hands Close (4-5)  
Two hands press back to each other as though squeezing a balloon.  
Repeat the above open and close motion 18 times.
- ❖ Perform closing exercise three times.

#### **Mind-Intent**

- ❖ Mind-Intent focuses on LAOGONG.  
Before performing upper, middle and lower

exercises, the Mind-Intent must focus and stay on LAOGONG for a while.

- ❖ Mind-Intent opens the hands  
Let the Mind-Intent control the opening and closing of the hands.

### **Key Points**

- ❖ The opening and closing movements should be performed when the LAOGONG becomes warm.
- ❖ The whole body becomes one. This includes body, mind, DANTIAN, eyes, spirit, HUNYUAN QI. When open, all opens, when close, all closes.
- ❖ The center is in the DANTIAN. When opening, start from DANTIAN and go outwards. When closing, start from outside and close to DANTIAN.
- ❖ Open and close must come naturally from Mind-Intent.
- ❖ Forget about breathing. Breathe naturally.

### **Hints**

- ❖ Tranquility overrides all. Think of DANTIAN; gaze at DANTIAN; listen to DANTIAN. When thinking big (open) it has no outside; when thinking small (close) it has no inside. Do not know whether you are the hand or the hand is you. It is like swimming in water, the spirit and shape move together like water. Open and close come naturally; the QI flows naturally in you.

### **Function**

- ❖ Using the opening and closing movements can increase internal strength. Open from the DANTIAN to the hands and close from the hands to the DANTIAN. The more you practice, the stronger you become internally.

- ❖ Opening and closing will harmonize YIN and YANG. It will open Shou San Yin (a major meridian) and San Yang (a major meridian) channels. It will help Sanjiao (three Jiao), pacify the six FU, and strengthen the five organs.
- ❖ Opening and closing help the REN and DU channels to communicate with each other. When opening, the QI goes up along the DU channel; when closing, the QI sinks down along the REN channels. Opening and closing will open the two channels and will help combat disease.
- ❖ Opening and closing enhances hardness and softness. When opening, the QI goes to the muscles and skin; when closing, the QI goes to the bones. When opening, the body is hard; when closing, the body is soft. Hardness and softness massage each other.
- ❖ When opening and closing, one should seek tranquility from motion. The Mind-Intent is focused on opening and closing. The heart is not all over the place; the spirit does not leave the body; external things do not bother the mind. This way, it is easy to go into tranquility.
- ❖ The way “opening and closing” is performed is synonym to that described in the Quan Jing<sup>82</sup>. Movement and tranquility supplement each other. Experience and application assist each other. This way the lightness and softness of Taijiquan comes naturally with Mind-Intent.

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<sup>82</sup> Taijiquan Treatise.

## BELT MERIDIAN GRINDING

# 带脉磨盘

This exercise is used the practice of the belt meridian to push the QI through the belt meridian and then to the DANTIAN. This exercise is divided into small grinding and large grinding.

### Movement

#### 1. Small Belt Meridian Grinding



9-1



9-2



9-3

- ❖ Raise the Hands to the Waist (9-1)  
Starting from the WUJI Standing Posture. Change to horse stance. Both hands rise to the right to waist height.
- ❖ Horizontal Negative Turning (9-2; 9-3; 9-4)  
Like on a flat surface, circulate (horizontally) the hands and arms together counter-clock wise.

Repeat this 9 times.

- ❖ Horizontally Positive Turning  
Same as above except directions are opposite.

Also repeat 9 times.



9-4



9-6

## **2. Large Belt Meridian Grinding**

- ❖ **Hands Stick to the Waist**  
Continue from the last movement. Both hands draw back to stick to the right waist. Mind-Intent is focused on DANTIAN.
- ❖ **Stick to the Waist and Turn Left**  
Continue from last movement. The hands do not leave the DAIMAI (belt meridian). The body carries the hands to the left 270° (this turning includes the DANTIAN turning the same way inside.)



9-7



9-8



9-9

- ❖ Both hands draw back (9-6; 9-7; 9-8; 9-9).

Repeat the above 9 times.

- ❖ Reversed Large Grinding  
Same as above except the direction is the opposite.

Repeat 9 times. Do closing movements. All comes to one.

### **Mind-Intent**

- ❖ Focus on the middle DANTIAN.
- ❖ The middle DANTIAN is the center; the DAIMAI is the inner circle and the hands are the outer circles.
- ❖ Eye and Mind-Intent lead the hands to turn 9 times.

### **Key Points**

- ❖ The whole body must turn as one unit.
- ❖ The turning must be circular, slowly and fluidly.

- ❖ The small grinding should reach 180° and the large one 360°.
- ❖ The movement of the QI is in the waist; the turning of the QI is in the hands; the sinking of the QI is in the feet. The change of the weight in the waist must coordinate with the movement of the turning.
- ❖ Forget about breathing. Go naturally.

### **Hints**

- ❖ The QI circle starts at the DAIMAI and then spreads to the hand circle. It is desired that the QI circle will gradually expand to leg and KUA, chest, back, shoulders, elbows and causing the whole body to be surrounded by QI circles.

### **Function**

- ❖ The QI will go through the DAIMAI and then to DANTIAN. This will cause a QI circle around the body.
- ❖ Foster yin and yang of the waist. The ability to move the QI up and down the body.
- ❖ Strengthen the kidney QI. Foster the ability to turn spirit into QI.
- ❖ LU (roll back), center equilibrium and HUNYUAN posture.



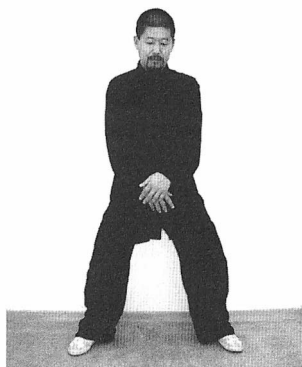
## HEAVEN AND EARTH OPEN AND CLOSE

# 乾坤开合

This exercise trains to resonate the early heaven QI and HUNYUAN QI together. In doing so, the 5 hearts will return to one. There are two sections in this exercise.

### Movement

#### Open the Heaven and Close the Earth



10-1



10-2



10-3

- ❖ Embracing the Stomach (10-1)  
Starting from the WUJI posture. Fold both hands on the middle DANTIAN. Left hand is on top of the right hand.
- ❖ Raise Hands to Open the Heaven (10-2; 10-3; 10-4)  
Raise both hands upwards. Open to the sides. When the weight shifts to the top of the body the arms and hands should also be fully extended.
- ❖ Loosening Downwards and Close the Earth (10-5; 10-6)

Continue from last move. Both hands slowly loosen and drop downwards. Palms gradually face each other. The body is slightly lowered. Both hands fold (crossed) in front of the DANTIAN as at the beginning.

Repeat the above 18 times. Then continue to the next.



10-4



10-5



10-6

**postures: PENG, Lu (roll back), Cai (grasp), an (push), Ji (squeeze) and center winding.**

## THE WAY OF HUNYUAN

Sometime in the year of 1993, one of my students gave me a set of two videotapes. He had purchased them from a retail outlet in the United States. The tapes cost him plenty of money but after viewing them, he decided that he did not like what he saw. "I personally don't think this is good Taiji, but he is famous. So you can view them and decide what to do with them. If you don't like them, you can throw them in the trash. I don't want them back." I took the videos home and viewed the first one, which was Chen Style Taijiquan First Routine. Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang performed it. The mechanical quality of the video was terrible. It was shot somewhere near a main traffic area because I could hear all sorts of traffic noise in the video. The cameraman was not holding the camera steady at all. He was suffering from a cold, from the sound of it. As he coughed, the picture in the video jumped up and down.

This had to be one of the worst Taiji videos ever made. I did not like the form I saw either. But there was something very strange about the way Grandmaster Feng executed his moves in the form. I had been practicing Chen Style Taijiquan for over 14 years by then and was very familiar with the Yilu form he did. The little difference in the choreography was not the problem. There was something un-Taiji about the way he did the form. That was how I felt at the time.

But he was my uncle in Taiji. I had never met him but read and heard directly from my master (Grandmaster Hong Junsheng) that he was one of Chen Fake's best disciples. He was a true martial artist and fighter, I was told. I figured that if he was so reputable, I needed to train myself to understand his form. The fact that I did not like the form



must have something to do with my lack of ability to understand it, not with that form itself.

I set out to do something really foolish, and maybe not respectful either. I put the tape in the VCR and made it my relaxing tape. Whenever I was tired and needed some rest, I would start the tape and lie on the couch. I watched as much as I could. Whenever I fell asleep, I slept with the video playing.

I did this on a regular basis, sometimes over 4 times a week. One day, a miracle happened. His form no longer looked too loose. I started seeing that his body moved with a lot of weight. I used to think that his body was not stable but I now felt that his body was so heavy that if I were to touch him it would be impossible for me to move him. I could not understand why the way I looked at his form changed. From that point on, the entire form looked different. All my previous views and prejudice on his form were gone.

His choppy moves now looked beautifully poetic. I saw the principle of "the force breaks but the intent continues." It was very difficult to verbalize why I felt that way. His execution of moves just gave me that feeling. I had read and heard this principle many times. But at this time, I felt it when I saw Feng's form. His form was full of events: sudden explosions, hard moves and the "tossing" of the body. All these became so flowingly graceful. There was so much power behind them and so much grace in them.

A few years later, when I became a disciple, I related this story to Grandmaster Feng and asked him what that special quality was about his Chen Style Taijiquan. He answered, "Hunyuan!"

How can we reach this level of Hunyuan? The right path is through the practice of the Hunyuan Qigong forms. First, we need to learn how to Zhanzhuang. Zhanzhuang sets the foundation for further Qigong practice and improvements. Everything is Zhanzhuang. Standing is Zhanzhuang. Moving is Zhanzhuang. Doing the form is also Zhanzhuang.

Later we can start the 12-form Qigong. This is the first and most important of the Qigong forms. If this form is

done persistently and correctly, there will be no need to do further complex forms.

A few months into my practice of Zhanzhuang and the 12-form, my body started to experience changes. These were changes that I was not familiar with. One of my Taiji brothers in the Temple of Earth class had previously warned me that fundamental changes to the body would take place. I would be “reborn” (Coming out of this body and change all bones<sup>83</sup>). As this kind of terminology is replete in the Chinese language, it didn’t surprise me at the time. I was not prepared to believe any of this as true.

I started to feel that the movement were like swimming in air. It was a feeling of lightness and yet distinctively not light-headedness. To say swimming in water is not an accurate description of what was happening. It was actually the tuning of the body’s senses that caused that feeling. The senses became more acute and somehow I got the feeling that I could feel the movement of air. It was very difficult to explain. Sometimes it feels like I was moving in air. Other times I was feeling that the air was moving around me.

This feeling increased. The air became very real. So much so that realized that it was not air. It was more like water. I had tried to do the form in a swimming pool before so I knew the feeling. Further, the sensation changed to that of movement in molasses. The body started to feel heavier and heavier. It was becoming difficult to move the limbs. Then the pain came. It was unbearable. Many a time I wanted to quit. But I knew that the pain could be a sign of something great on its way. At least it was different from previous experiences. There was something special. I persisted.

To test whether a system of exercise is useful one needs to examine whether it produces results that are not present in other systems. Because the results are unique, they might sometimes appear to be scary. When my bones

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<sup>83</sup> The Chinese was “Tuo Tai Huan Gu” which means, shed the embryo and change the bones.

started cracking up while doing the most peaceful moves, I was surprised. I instinctively knew that I was moving on to yet another stage.

Each person on the path of cultivation must know that the experiences will never be the same for everyone. The general direction is the same. One will experience the heaviness of the head. We call this "the hat". Some people wear this "hat" for a few weeks while others for a few months. One will also experience the early heaven breathing called "no breathing". This is when the Dantian starts sucking air in and pumping air out of your stomach. You cease to do any breathing work. Do not worry! You will have enough air and oxygen in your system. You will get more!

When the Dantian heats up, we call it the "setting up of the furnace". This is when the Early Heaven Qi will be nourished and cultivated. This is the real beginning.

Along the path of Hunyuan Qigong cultivation, one will experience a myriad of "strange" and "bizarre" phenomena. He will feel like being strike by thunder (The Six Roots are shaken up). He will feel that his feet were stuck in cement (Qi is sinking to the Dantian). He will feel that his body has disappeared (The Qi has reached the furthest limbs). He will experience a time warp<sup>84</sup>.

Hunyuan Qigong is like an onion. There are layers and layers. In Chinese, I say "Wonder inside more wonder!" Small Heave and the Large Heaven. They are all there for you to experience!

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<sup>84</sup> I was learning the Hunyuan Cannon Fist from Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang in the Temple of Heaven in the summer of 2000. After the instruction time, he started to lead us in a Zhanzhuang session. He stood there for over two hours. The few of us present that morning practiced for about half an hour and then got into other things. We even had box lunch there. When he returned to normal, he urged us to do a bit more. He had not realized that he had been standing for over two hours. He thought he just got started.

## ONE GRAIN OF HUNYUAN QI

一粒  
混  
元  
氣

It was a nice warm afternoon on the mountaintop in Santa Cruz. The Tibetan Buddhist Shrine overlooks the Pacific Ocean with a majestic view. It was truly breathtaking. The organizers had surely chosen a good spot for this workshop. After a month of traveling from New England in the east to Tulsa, Oklahoma in the heart of the USA, the Pacific West coast was very appealing to me. I needed some recharging.

Earlier in the morning, Yaron Seidman, my disciple from New York, and I did our daily Hunyuan Qigong on the cliff with deer peering at us. Certainly the air was fresh. Unlike the magnetic field of Sedona in Arizona, I felt a crispy freshness and clarity in the air. It was a different quality than what I was used to. It felt right. The ambience was good for Qigong. As we stood on the cliff in our Zhanzhuang pose after the 12-form Qigong practice, a thick mist crept in on us. We could no longer see the ocean water. But the sound of the ocean splashing against the rock cliffs was still pleasant in our ears. It was very reminiscent of Shang Qing Gong<sup>85</sup> in the Daoist magical mount of Laoshan<sup>86</sup>.

It was said that the earliest Qigong practice was the result of observation of the animal deer. When this graceful animal runs, it moves as though floating in the air. The ancients used the analogy to this magnificent animal as proof that the physical body can be as light as air. It was also observed that when going to sleep, this magical creature covers its navel with one hoof and the anus with the other. If the ancients were right, then Santa Cruz must be a place for immortals. The deer would not choose a place that is incompatible to their "Qigong" lifestyle.

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<sup>85</sup> Upper Clear Palace. A famous Daoist Temple in Shandong, China.

<sup>86</sup> It is a sacred Daoist mountain on the sea shore of Yellow Sea, in Shandong Province, China.

Santa Cruz was one of the three stops on Shifu's<sup>87</sup> 2001 summer American trip. This was the second time he was in the USA and the first time<sup>88</sup> that he was here in the capacity of creator of the Hunyuantaiji System.

At the beginning of the next morning, I felt nothing special about the place. The Qi level was rather normal. There was this strange sense of clearness and tranquility. By breakfast time, I felt the Qi was going through my whole body. It was not concentrated in one area like before. This Qi was evenly distributed throughout my body. Previously, there would be a pulsing sensation in the Baihui<sup>89</sup> and Yongquan<sup>90</sup> but this time, it was much more than that.

Shifu did not come to this morning's session. Yaron and I joined the others in the exercises while the host led the way. Brother Chen Xiang (he was on the trip as Grand Master Feng's assistant and he stayed with Grand Master Feng) came by himself, announcing that Shifu would join us after breakfast. He beckoned me to come with him. Together, we moved to the other side of the clearing, where we faced the practicing crowd. "Let's do our own practice." We looked at each other and both smiled. This is called the "meeting of the mind". It is like telepathy. When two people practice Qigong to a high level, they understand each other's body language. Verbal communication becomes redundant. The understanding between Chen Xiang and I that morning was this: The air is clear; the place is magical. We need to absorb it into our body. Seize the moment. The Zhanzhuang<sup>91</sup> was different. Within minutes, I was into the state of "total non-existence."

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<sup>87</sup> Shifu means, "master". It is a term used by a disciple to refer to his/her master. When referring to any master, one uses the master's last name as a prefix. In this case, I am referring to my master, Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang.

<sup>88</sup> On his last trip in 1986, he was on a Chinese government mission.. Officially he was the oldest person on that martial art delegation. Unofficially, the government hired him as a bodyguard to protect the "martial artists" on this delegation. What an oxymoron!

<sup>89</sup> It is on the top of the head.

<sup>90</sup> It is at the bottom of the foot.

<sup>91</sup> This term means Daoist standing meditation.



In the afternoon, Shifu lectured on the theory of Hunyuan Qigong and Hunyuan Taiji. As I had heard this lecture many times, I decided to do some sitting meditation while listening to the lecture. He was eloquent. So good that he talked non-stop for two hours. While sitting in meditation mode, I listened without hearing; gazed without seeing; and focused without a purpose. As if the body was naturally following his descriptions, I went into a deep trance. The normal Qi circulation in the body was increased to a magnified clarity. There was an obvious ball moving inside the body, mainly in the 18 meridians. Each time, it passed through the hand; it pushed the Laogong<sup>92</sup> point very hard. I felt that it rested on the Laogong of the left hand for a while. My experience told me that this would be the Dan<sup>93</sup> that I was working on. There should be a physical representation in the form of a red dot in the palm. I also knew that if I changed my hand position, it would disappear before I could see it. As a matter of fact, while I was thinking about this point, the red dot (Dan) in the palm probably already disappeared. I told Yaron about it and asked him to check on my palm in a few minutes while I re-entered my trance.

Sure enough, he confirmed the sighting of a red dot the size of a walnut in the centre of my left palm, exactly where I felt it existed. It disappeared in seconds after I moved my hand to show him.

When I became a disciple in January of 1998, Shifu told me that it could take as long as 4 years or as short as 4 months to reach the level of one grain of Hunyuan Qi. Brother Chen Xiang was gifted. He reached it in 4 months. Well, obviously I wasn't as gifted. It took me longer. Still, I

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<sup>92</sup> Labor palace. It is in the palm of the hand.

<sup>93</sup> "Dan" refers to the elixir of life. There are two types of Dan. One is internal and the other external. Internal Dan is the solid form of Qi that is a little ball. In Hunyuan Qigong, this Dan is referred to as a "One Grain of Hunyuan Qi". The external Dan is the elixir that is made from mixing chemicals such as mercury and lead. The result is supposed to be a pill that can guarantee longevity after swallowing it. Of course, in history, this has not been achieved. This is a major reason why people eventually turned to the practice of internal Dan.

was ecstatic! Zhanzhuang everyday and 2,600 repetitions of the entrance form did pay off!

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### 问答

These questions and answers are based on my personal experiences with the Hunyuan Qigong system. Most are directly transmitted to me while others are information that I heard and read in Hunyuan Qigong Academy internal materials and public materials such as handouts, booklets, books and videos. Some of the information provided here has appeared elsewhere within the Hunyuan Taiji System before.

#### 1. ARE NAVEL AND HUIYIN<sup>94</sup> BOTH LOWER DANTIAN?

First of all, those two specific points are not Dantian. They are used as quick reference points. They only indicate approximate areas. They direct the learner to the general vicinity. Now let's talk about the two points in discussion. The navel refers to the Dantian in the general abdomen area. It does not matter what you call it (Upper, Middle, or Lower), this is the general Dantian that everyone refers to. When the word Dantian is used without specifying which one, this is the ONE. When the navel area is referred to as the Lower Dantian, the Upper Dantian is identified as the point in between the eyes (precisely the Zuqiao point) and the Middle Dantian is in the solar plexus area.

When the navel area is referred to as the Middle Dantian, the Upper Dantian is identified as the point in between the eyes (precisely the Zuqiao point), while the Lower Dantian becomes the Huiyin point in between the sexual organ and the anus.

Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang's Hunyuan Qigong system uses the navel area as the Middle Dantian. It is designated so according to the principle that the Middle Dantian is the place for nurturing and storing. The spleen, which in more general terms can be associated the stomach, is the organ which functions

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<sup>94</sup> This is the point where the Yin joins. It is between the genital and anus.

as soil, from which all things grow and in which everything is stored. The Lower Dantian, the Huiyin point, is where Essence is produced. The Upper Dantian, the Zujiao<sup>95</sup> point, is where the Spirit (the finest of things that so pure that there is no substance) is stored.

2. CAN A PERSON BREAK BRICKS AND STONE SLABS LIKE IN EXTERNAL HARD QIGONG?

Most definitely! However, this is the usage of Qi. One has to understand that essentially Qi is always the same. It is universal. The difference is in what you do with it. For example, you can use the same Qi to heal, to maintain your own health, to enhance Taiji or martial art fighting ability, to break things, or to do "magic"<sup>96</sup>. The method is to simply direct your Qi with your mind-intent to your hand (It can be elsewhere on the body too). This will take repetitive training under the condition that Qi is already achieved and is achieved at a higher level.

It is not advised to do so, however. The author is of the opinion that Qi must be cultivated only for the single reason of Qi itself, not for anything else. Even seemingly desirable functions such as push-hands in Taiji and healing in medicine must be considered derivatives of Qi, not the direct purpose of Qi.

3. CAN A PERSON EMIT EXTERNAL QI THROUGH PRACTICE OF QIGONG?

It is possible for the person to emit QI to treat patients. Many Qigong masters who are trained as healers have the ability to emit external Qi. I have witness Master Liu Weiming of Shenyang in 1993 emitting enough Qi to push a person over from about

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<sup>95</sup> This term refers to the point in between the eyes. It is also called the ancestral cavity.

<sup>96</sup> It is the author's believe that all these can be done. The fact that very few people can do any of the listed does not make them impossible.

15 feet away<sup>97</sup>. I have also witnessed master Chen Xiang of Beijing, pulling me from about a foot away<sup>98</sup>.

The form of Qigong I practice is Hunyuan Qigong, which is primarily a martial art Qigong. Its main purpose is for personal health and for Taijiquan push-hands. When Daoist Sage Hu Yaozhen encountered enemies, he never had to physically touch them. He was always able to defeat his enemies from one to three feet away. Because of this ability Hu Yaozhen was praised in Beijing as "Single Finger Conquered Heaven and Earth".

4. CAN A PERSON LEARN MORE THAN ONE KIND OF QIGONG?

Sure! There are hundreds of varieties of Qigong in the world. Each type is designed for a specific purpose. However, they all share the same principles. In this sense, they are all the same in the way that they don't cause fundamental conflicts. It is advisable, though, this thinking does not extent beyond the scope of Qigong. For example, one should not mistakenly believe that yoga is the same as Qigong when he/she finds similarities between the two.

Most masters, however, prefer that the students only stick to one kind. This is because Qigong requires dedicated effort and time. Diversification in learning will lead to loss of practice time for the student.

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<sup>97</sup> The circumstances at the time were that I asked Master Liu to show me his Qi ability. He emitted Qi to a Canadian woman visiting in my hotel room. She was not aware of what we were doing. She did not speak Chinese and did not hear our conversation. She was totally unaware of the fact that Liu was a Qigong master.

<sup>98</sup> I cannot say that he actually pulled me. It was a strange feeling that I was put into some kind of a whirlpool that moved me. Definitely I felt that if I resisted, he would not be able to pull me at all. I was fascinated by the feeling and followed along, so to speak.

5. CAN QIGONG AND TAIJIQUAN BE PRACTICED AT THE SAME TIME?

First of all, Qigong and Taijiquan are different disciplines. However, they are both disciplines that share the Chinese culture, Confucian thinking, Daoism and Buddhism. So they can be practiced at the same time. It is utterly acceptable to practice these two arts simultaneously. In general terms, Qigong is concerned with the generation of Qi while Taiji is concerned with movements (dissipation of Qi). On the basis that they are not the same, they share many similar characteristics and thus complement each other quite well. As a matter of fact, all Taijiquan practitioners should do some Qigong. The ancients tell us that Taijiquan without Qigong is an empty vessel. On the other hand, Qigong practitioners do not necessarily have to practice Taijiquan.

6. CAN QIGONG BE PRACTICED TOGETHER WITH OTHER MARTIAL ARTS?

Yes, it can. The reasoning is similar to that of the question on Qigong and Taijiquan. As a matter of fact, many martial arts systems have their own built-in Qigong systems. For example, there is "Tendon Loosening Qigong" in the Shaolin style of kung fu.

7. CAN QIGONG BE SELF-TAUGHT WITHOUT GOING ASTRAY?

Yes, but with difficulty. The difficulty is that people get confused if they follow one system and receive information on many at the same time. This is a major problem with self-study in Qigong. We have advanced enough at this time in human development that we cannot live without information. Each person is thirsty for information. This is not wrong overall. But at certain stages of Qigong training this practice can be a very negative influence. As long as this is overcome, one should have no problem learning a Qigong system without a personal instructor. The key is to follow one system and comply with all the requirements of the system. When a higher level is

reached, one can venture out to improve on his/her Qigong by learning more from other styles.

8. CAN ONE FEEL THE EXISTENCE OF THE QI FILM?

Definitely! One can feel that the skin is wrapped in a protection layer and that the space between joints is filled with QI too. One can feel the bones to be more solid and strong. When practicing CHANSIGONG<sup>99</sup>, one can feel balls of QI around the body. At the highest level, one will have 18 balls rotating in the body.

Most people have heard that at an advanced level in Taiji, the practitioner becomes extremely slow, soft and flow-like. This is caused by the presence of this Qi film. For those who don't have this film. They can only pretend to have the above characteristics. It is very easy to identify those who pretend to be slow.

9. CAN ONE WITHSTAND HEAVY BLOWS AFTER ACHIEVING HUNYUAN BODY PROTECTION GONG?

Yes. The body can withstand and neutralize outside heavy blows. The body will be full of TAIJI BALLS with the following characteristics: 1) the body is full of QI; 2) hardness and softness will compliment each other; 3) storing and release of energy becomes interchangeable; 4) entice into emptiness; 5) strong PENG strength. It has been a common scene for me to see the disbelief of people at my push hands demonstrations. According to the tradition of our Taiji system<sup>100</sup>, I never choreograph push hands demonstrations. I simply choose someone (sometimes a student but most times people who are new to this) and go from there. When students punch me, I never block (of course with the except of certain vital areas

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<sup>99</sup> Silk Reeling exercises.

<sup>100</sup> That is the system of Chen Style Taijiquan passed on to Hong Junsheng and Feng Zhiqiang by Chen Fake. I am one of the few fortunate direct benefactors of this transmission.

such as the eyes and the groin area). I just let them punch with all their power. Sometimes this punch produces a loud noise, like that of a big drum. Because I cannot be hurt, this all appear to be quite staged and fake. It is unfortunate that through experience, I came to understand that real fighting always look fake while well choreographed fake fighting appears to be real.

In 1995, I did a push hands demonstration for a local Tae Kwan Do school. At the end of the demonstration, my opponent (a 6<sup>th</sup> Dan Karate instructor) struck me on the chest, stomach and arms. I received a round of loud applause from the large group of students and potential students at that studio but never heard from them again. Many years later, I ran into a parent who was at that demonstration. She revealed to me that after I left, they had a good laugh at how fake my demonstration was.

In July of 2000, I was challenged (not in a bad way) by a karate person in Millbury, MA, at the end of a workshop. This new student to the Wah Lum Temple was a former marine. My friend Stan Tabor, who was the head of the school, nodded to give me permission to proceed. I knew that Ken was OK then. Well, he was a large and strong person. He ran at me and started his karate/kung fu punches. I counted 22 blows to my stomach by the time he stopped. There was so much power that my whole body was shook violently. I felt that the shockwave reached all the way to my head. Sifu Stan was obviously concerned. At all, I was such a small guy. There was total discrepancy in physical size and power.

There was no damage, not even a bruise anywhere. I assumed that the next day it would hurt. I waited five days. Still there was no sign of any discomfort or injury. That was the first real test of the Qi film of the Hunyuan Qigong system. At that time, I had only been doing Hunyuan Qigong for 2 years.



10. CAN STUDENTS OF OTHER STYLES OF TAIJQUAN AND EXERCISES SUCH AS YANG, WU, WU/HAO AND SUN STYLE TAIJQUAN LEARN QIGONG?

Definitely. Hunyuan Qigong is not about techniques and little tricks. It is about fundamental skills. It is the Kung training. Everyone serious about health and martial arts will benefit from practice of Hunyuan Qigong.

11. DOES EVERYONE EXPERIENCE ZIFADONGGONG?

No. Either one experiences ZIFADONGGONG or not, is not a reflection of QI levels. One must constantly be reminded that ultimately everything must return to "emptiness". All feelings, sensations, ability, skill, pain, power, etc. are just superficial representations of the inner emptiness, which is the Dao. As one gets closer to the Dao, all (those representations mentioned above) will disappear.

12. HOW IS "EVERY BREATH GOES TO THE ROOT"?

First of all, one must slow down and complete the breath. Each breath must be completed with full inhale and full exhale. On this basis, one has to extend, or length the breath. When breathing is regulated in this manner, one will start to have Qi circulation. When the Qi circulates, the breath will become deeper and longer. In the end, the breathing will be a total regeneration of the stale elements in the body. This is called every breath goes to the root.

13. HOW IS THE QI FILM FORMED?

The characteristic of this Qigong form is to move the Qi with YI<sup>101</sup> and direct the QI according to QIAO<sup>102</sup>. This means that the YI entices the QI into the bone marrow and moves the QI to the bone crevice. Through QIAO the QI is taken to the meridians, thus spread throughout the body. In this

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<sup>101</sup> This is the Chinese word, which means, "Mind intent".

<sup>102</sup> This is the Chinese word that means spot, cavity, point, or meridian.

way, inside and outside fuse together and the whole body becomes one. Through this practice a QI FILM is generated both inside and outside the body.

14. HOW LONG SHOULD ONE PRACTICE FOR ONE SESSION?

At the beginning, 10 minutes to 30 minutes will be adequate. This means a few minutes of Zhanzhuang and then the rest of time devoted to the Qigong form. If we are talking about Hunyuan Qigong, one can practice the forms with 3 repetitions first. One can also use the normal 9-repetition routine but do 4 of the 12 forms. On an average, one should practice for 45 minutes to an hour in the morning to get the maximum result.

15. IS IT BETTER TO PRACTICE HUNYUAN QIGONG FIRST OR TAIJIQUAN FIRST?

In the winter when it is quite cold, one should start with silk reeling or Taiji and then get into Qigong. Silk reeling and Taijiquan moves are more active and will produce body heat when the body is not warmed up. In hot and warm weather conditions, one should practice Qigong first, keeping in mind all the necessary procedure and conditions for good Qigong session.

16. IS IT GOOD TO EXPERIENCE ZIFADONGGONG?

Yes, it is positive to experience this.

17. IS IT NECESSARY TO USE MEDICAL OR MEDICINAL ALCOHOL?

In essence, alcohol (like the Chinese high percentage white lightening type of liquor) is the Qi of grains. It is known to have the ability to make the user feel the feel faster. The use of such supplement to augment Qigong progress has been quite common among Qigong practitioners. Some supplements are known to induce Qigong-like state. A serious practitioner should not use any substance to enhance the generation of Qi. That is why ancient masters even adopt austere diets order to generate Qi from their own prepared body, not by other means.

18. IS IT NORMAL NOT TO EXPERIENCE ZIFADONGGONG?

Yes, it is. However, the ability to breathe with the QIAO is the indicator of high level of QIGONG. There is nothing wrong if one does not experience it. Do not force yourself to do it. Continue to practice and only hold the YI to DANTIAN.

19. IS IT REALLY TRUE THAT ONCE ONE ACHIEVES HUNYUAN BODY PROTECTION GONG, THE PERSON BECOMES INVULNERABLE TO DISEASE?

Once one achieves Hunyuan Body Protection Gong, the QI FILM protects the body. This means that from the outside, the physical environment (such as virus and pollution) cannot penetrate this film to get inside the body; and from the inside, the SEVEN EMOTIONS AND SIX DESIRES cannot bother the person. The internal organs will work smoothly together and the metabolism functions well. Even when there is slight discomfort (which means a break down in the harmonization of the five organs), it can be readjusted and thus get well effortlessly. Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang was a man in his mid-70s and yet in the years 1998 and the time of this writing (2002), I have not seen him ill yet. He has not even caught a cold. I witness a self-healing experience in March of 1999. While taking a shower, he had stepped on a bar of soap that accidentally dropped on the floor of his tiny, poorly lit bathroom. He slipped and shatters a few small bones in his ankle area. The entire area was swollen. Two of his disciples in Beijing who were Tui Na<sup>103</sup> specialists came to help. A doctor (of Western medicine) who examined the X-ray predicted that he needed 1-3 months of resting to recover. He was advised not to use his foot so as not to re-injure it. To be sure, the doctor said that it could take 3 months since Feng was an older man with

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<sup>103</sup> It is the Chinese art of bone setting and massaging. It is somewhat between a massage therapy and physiotherapy.

slower recovery ability. Two days after the accident, he insisted on teaching me push hands personally. This put me in a predicament. I didn't want to be the cause for his further injuries. But he wanted to teach me personally because I don't see him often. I suggested that I should just push hands with Lu Chun and he could supervise us while sitting on the bed. All agreed to this new plan. In five minutes, though, he was on the floor, working with us again.

In a week, he was teaching me in the Ditan Park already. He attributed this speedy recovery to Qigong. He had been circulating Qi to his ankle area while sitting on the bed, he told me.

20. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN WHEN PRACTICING QIGONG?

The answer to this question should take up one chapter in a book. A brief answer here is "yes". It is much easier for women to achieve Qi than for men. This is because the distance between the "heart" and "Dantian" is closer for women than for men. (This is a traditional view, not a scientific one). In addition, women's lifestyle today (as opposed to at a different stage of civilization in history) tends to have more natural characteristics that are conducive to Qigong than men. One example is the natural ability for women to yield<sup>104</sup>. On a specific note, women are generally Yin in physical shell but are full of Yang energy inside. This is opposite of what men are.

Because of the opposite nature, women turn counter-clock wise in many of the exercises of the Hunyuan Qigong set when doing rotational work.

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<sup>104</sup> Although this view is widely held, there are no scientific studies to support it. This could simply be because people have not studied this subject yet. The comment about yielding is from my personal observation of women when faced with a situation of confrontation such as in a Taiji push hands competition. I observed that women tend to be more long lasting and resilient.

(Please see the section in this book on the Hunyuan Qigong forms for further information on this topic).

21. "ONCE THE REN AND DU OPEN, ALL THE MERIDIANS ARE OPEN". ARE THE REN AND DU POINTS NORMALLY OPEN IN PEOPLE?

First of all, these two terms refer to the two major energy channels in the human body. REN is the channel in the center front of the body while DU is the channel in the center back of the body.

REN and DU meridians are always open for all people. If they are not, the person is dead! What we train is to connect the REN and DU in a particular way that allows the energy in the two channels to flow in an endless loop. In addition, this flow must eventually take over as the main flow in the body. This is the difference. With normal people, the REN and DU meridians are insignificant channels. That's because they are not fully connected and open.

22. WHAT ARE "THREE CLARITIES" AND "GATHERING THE THREE CLARITIES TO ONE"?

Clear the heart; clear the mind and clear the desires. When these three are cleared, one can affix his/her mind on the Dantian.

23. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HUNYUAN QI AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS?

Through the practice of Hunyuan Qigong, one can get one-grain of Hunyuan Qi. Further, there will be a Qi film around the whole body, making up the Hunyuan Body Protection Gong. This will make the internal organs healthy and external body strong. The practitioner will have the ability to issue power from one point of the body<sup>105</sup>. This power will have the penetrating ability of a bullet. It can penetrate through muscles and bones. Let me relate a story here to exemplify this point.

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<sup>105</sup> This point can be any part of the body.

When I took a group of students from North America to visit the Shaolin Temple in 1999, we were fortunate enough to have a private demonstration of martial arts by the real Shaolin Monks<sup>106</sup>. During the second half of the demonstration, the monks demonstrated the art of throwing a needle through a pane of glass, and hard Qigong. One young monk demonstrated the art of "Iron Vest". His assistants used thick wooden staff on almost all parts of his body but he managed to break all the staff. After that, we were invited to punch him. My students from North America all tried but could not hurt or move him. My friend Ji Jieshan, who arranged the private demonstration, went to give it a try. He came back to me at the stand shouting and swearing. He had hurt his hand punching the young monk. He had been a manager for over 20 years without any physical exercise but in his mind, he thought he was still young and strong. So he punched very hard. He demanded that I, as the leader of the group, punch the monk too. I went and punched, matter of fact, just to satisfy their (Mr. Ji and my students) desire. What I did not foresee was that the young monk staggered back three steps at the touch of my fist. I did not try to punch him at all. He came to my hotel room in the evening, requesting a massage for his stomach. I had hurt him too much and he was feeling a lot of discomfort that day.

#### 24. WHAT IS HUNYUAN QIGONG?

Hunyuan Qigong is a form of martial art Qigong created by Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang. When we say Grandmaster Feng created it, we don't mean that he made it up. We mean that he is the person who crystallized it into a clearly defined distinct form that carries a specific physical feature and name.

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<sup>106</sup> I see this because nowadays more of the demonstrations are done by "leased" groups of monk that are in the vicinity of the Shaolin Temple. The real Shaolin monk are very busy with visitors.

Grandmaster Feng has been practicing martial arts all his life and is considered one of the most accomplished martial artists in China in the 20th century. He was fortunate to have also learned the Xin Yi Liu He style of internal martial arts from Daoist sage Hu Yaozhen. Hu also taught Feng privately the secret of Daoist meditation and Qigong. At the beginning, Grandmaster Feng practice all the martial arts and Qigong forms with equal emphasis. As he aged, he started putting more and more attention to the Qigong system that he inherited. He put hours, days and years of hard work into synthesizing his knowledge into a system that is easy to learn. This form is called the "Hunyuan Taiji System". Hunyuan Qigong is a major foundation part of this system.

25. WHAT IS THE CHARACTERISTIC OF HUNYUAN QIGONG?

In general terms, we can say that Hunyuan Qigong is a natural Qigong. It emphasizes the need to relax, both physically and mentally. Hunyuan Qigong produced very drastic results but it is process based, not result based. Therefore, there is no pressure to show drastic improvement. This is another part that makes this form natural. Many schools of Qigong forget that Qigong is part of the Dao. They try to produce results to impress themselves and others. That is contrary to the idea of Qigong, and contrary to the Great Dao.

Like other types of Qigong, Hunyuan Qigong is effective in disease prevention, prolongation of life, and improvement of general health. In addition, it has the ability to nurture NEIGONG<sup>107</sup> for martial arts. It can augment the practice of Taijiquan and strengthen the practitioner's YUANQI<sup>108</sup>. It increases internal strength and therefore adds power to Taijiquan push-

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<sup>107</sup> This word is synonymous to Qigong, with a special connotation toward martial arts.

<sup>108</sup> It means the original Qi.

hands and Sanshou<sup>109</sup>. These are fundamental abilities and are not restricted by style or school.

26. WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF HUNYUAN BODY PROTECTION GONG?

There are two aspects: 1) in terms of health, Hunyuan Body Protection Gong will make the practitioner solid inside and strong outside. He/she will be invulnerable to disease and will be energetic all the time. 2) In terms of self-defence, the body will become like a shell that cannot be penetrated. This is similar to what has been described in other styles such "the Golden Bell Body Protection Armour", "Iron Vest", etc.

When attacking your opponent, your fist will be like a bullet that can penetrate anything. At a higher level, your fist will have the ability to "explode inside your opponent". This means that you can loosely put your fist on your opponent and he will feel an explosion inside his body. Most of the time, he will feel that your punch is unbelievably strong. Sometimes, by simply touching your opponent with you hand or fist, you will notice your opponent totally "shaken up". I experienced this from Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang shortly after I started learning from him. A few years after I was on the Hunyuan Qigong program, I don't dare to experiment punching methods with students during my seminars any more. Students simply get too hurt by simple touches.

With 20 years of pure Chen Style Taijiquan and then 4 years of combined Chen Style and Hunyuan Taiji, I can say for certain that my ability to explode the fist inside a persons body comes from Hunyuan Qigong training.

27. WHAT IS THE REASON BEHIND ZIFADONGGONG?

It is because in this QIGONG form one can reach the state of YI and QI melting into one and

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<sup>109</sup> A form of physical sparring based on Taiji principles.



QIAO Breathing. According to Chinese medical theory, without YIN and YANG, the inner body is static and is like a piece of wood that can only gradually decay and disappear. The upper body is YANG and lower YIN. When YANG and YIN combines, life is started and the dead wood becomes a live tree. When YIN and YANG combine and are sent to DANTIAN, the DANTIAN (QIAO) will breathe on its own, like the dial on a grandfather clock. The YANG QI that is generated this way will start rushing the body.

28. WHAT KIND OF QIGONG DOES HUNYUAN QIGONG BELONG TO?

There are many varieties of Qigong. Generally speaking, it is divided into four varieties: Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian and martial art. According to different practice paths, it is divided into three kinds: Static, Moving and Combined Static and Moving. Hunyuan Qigong belongs to martial art Qigong. It encompasses both static and moving Qigong. The static portion is Zhanzhuang and the 12-form set. The moving portion is the entire Hunyuan Taiji curriculum including the 24-form, 48-form, 32-form, 38-form, 46-form, 83-form, Cannon Fist form and weapons training. When doing the above Taiji sets, we are not merely executing series of physical and martial moves. We are always doing Qigong. Only so will our abilities improve. Only so will the Taiji be the original Taiji in intent and in content. Otherwise, one is merely copying body postures and developing muscles.

It must be pointed out that there are only major demarcations, but there are no clear divisions. All Qigong schools must have elements from other schools. This is determined by the nature of the mixing of different religions and philosophies in Chinese history.

29. I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO COMPLETE THE WHOLE SET IN ONE SESSION. WHAT SHALL I DO?

One should choose one move and repeat it

many times. This should last more than 5 minutes. Ultimately, there should be no form, or movements in Qigong. The various sets in Hunyuan Qigong (and in other styles of Qigong too) are designed to make it interesting for people so that they will stick to a prolonged period of practice. Once a person is used to a habitual practice routine, he/she does not need all the different forms. At this stage, one can practice with more flexibility in terms of time of practice, location of practice and method of practice.

30. WHEN CAN A PERSON GET ONE GRAIN OF HUNYUAN QI?

It depends on the following conditions: 1) natural physical constitution, 2) born physical features, 3) life style and habits 4) focus and determination, 5) persistence and correctness of the practice.

Generally speaking, it takes one to three years to achieve the One Grain Hunyuan Qi. It is also quite common that people practice Qigong and Taijiquan all their lives without achieving this Qi. In my experience, I have also seen people, such as some of my Taiji brothers, achieving this one-grain within four months. But we have to be cautious that most people receive what is called pseudo-Qi at the beginning. Pseudo Qi will be dealt with elsewhere in this book.

31. WHY IS REALITY CALLED AN "ILLUSION"? In many religions, especially Buddhism and Daoism, our physical reality is regarded, as an "illusion" while what cannot be seen, or comprehended, is considered the only thing that is real. What the ancients saw was that all material matter (that we call reality) either die or is destroyed, or is transformed. From the point of view thousands of years, material matter cannot last. The ancients were interested in what controls all the life and death cycle. They believed that there was a mysterious force that controls everything. This force has no shape. We cannot see it. We cannot feel it. Human ability does not allow us to directly experience

it. So in a way, to humans, it does not exist. But it is this only thing that is real. The physical reality as we see it, is an illusion in the sense that it does not last.

32. WHY IT IS CALLED "ONE GRAIN OF HUNYUAN QI"

Through the practice of the whole form of this Qigong form, the Early Heaven and After Heaven Qi will mix into one in the DANTIAN area and become one grain. This one-grain of Qi is like a small Ball of Qi. It circulates endlessly in the meridians in the body. At the beginning it is very small, almost intangible and cannot be felt. Later on through practice, it can grow to its full size of about the size of a small walnut. This Qi Ball can be felt by the practitioner but cannot be seen or felt by others. The only way to verify this Qi is by means of push hands. One will feel a drastic increase in power level.

33. WILL ZIFADONGGONG LEAD TO PSYCHOSIS?

No. Outer body movement (self initiated body movement) is a natural representation of "ultimate tranquility causes motion". It is the normal reflection of the combination of YI and QI; Breathing through the DANTIAN; and the initiation of YANG QI. It is both mindless and mindful. From the point of view of its self-initiation, it is mindless. From the point of view of its regularity, it is mindful. This means that this kind of movements is "to move the QI with the mind." When the mind is moving the QI in the body, naturally it also pushes the muscles, bones and tendons, thus causing the phenomenon of outer body movement. Some classic books refer to this as "Quan without Quan; Mind without mind; and the Real YI is in without YI."

To have mind (control) means: 1) when the YI is focused the mind reaches there; when the mind is there the QI is there; when the QI is there, the force reaches there. 2) When the YI is scattered the mind is scattered; when the mind is scattered the QI is

scattered; when the QI is scattered, the force is scattered. Therefore, when the YI is refocused, the outer body movement stops. This way one will not go astray in this practice. But if one seeks to have outer body movement, or using other means to force to have outer body movement, one will cause harmful results.

34. WILL THERE BE ZIFADONGGONG<sup>110</sup>?

When QIAO breathing is achieved, there will be various degrees of ZIFADONGGONG. This can be small and local (like a little twitch) or big and throughout the body. This kind of move will change from irregular to regular.

35. CAN I PRACTICE IMMEDIATELY AFTER I EAT?

If you are extremely hungry, you can eat a little bit before practice. As a general rule, though, one should not practice within half an hour of meals. The practice of Qigong is the process of working the energy in the body. To make the energy work, one has to learn to generate and move the energy of the body, not of the food. Another reason for a break after meals is the idea of harmony, not conflict. We cannot see it or feel it but in reality, after we eat, the body is immediately engaged in very dedicated effort to digest the food. All resources must be devoted to this task. This is why we feel drowsy after eating a heavy meal. The body is working extra hard. If we start Qigong practice immediately after a meal, we are causing the body departments to fight for resources. This will cause disharmony.

36. IS IT NORMAL TO HAVE INCREASED FOOD INTAKE AFTER PRACTICING QIGONG?

In an overall comparison, a person should have better appetite and metabolism after four

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<sup>110</sup> Self initiated body movement.

months of Qigong practice. So if he/she has increased food intake this way, it is a good sign.

37. DO I HAVE TO BE VEGETARIAN TO PRACTICE QIGONG?

No, you don't. But it is a good idea to eat more vegetables and less meat products. Vegetables are lighter food for humans to consume. They don't strain the system as much. But for those who have a lot of physical activity (in serious training), they should eat appropriate amount of meat. This will provide the much needed energy for the activities.

For those who are vegetarian, it is a good idea to eat a lot of soybean products such as tofu and soy milk.

38. WHAT ABOUT OTHER VICES SUCH AS ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO?

Both alcohol and tobacco are detrimental to Qigong training. One thing that people have noticed is that among the martial artists in China, Grandmaster Feng's group stands out as the only group without any smokers. This is very strange in a country where smoking is almost 100% among men. This is so because of the strict requirement of Qigong practice. This also shows that Grandmaster Feng's Taiji system is seriously rooted in Qigong, not only physical movements.

In regard to alcohol, the story is different. A small amount of alcohol does not harm the body. It enhances energy flow in the body. It is like doing a little bit exercise. For this reason, moderate alcohol consumption is allowed. This is limited to wine and low percentage Chinese alcohol.

39. WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR CLOTHING FOR PRACTICING?

Loose fitting outfits are essential. In general, the garment should be almost invisible and non-existent to the person who wears them. This way the garment will not restrict the movements of the practitioner. So belt is out. Wintertime, one can wear hat and gloves, provided they do not restrict

circulation. Women must not wear high heels. Watches, bracelets, rings and any other objects that might restrict circulation should be taken off.

40. SHOULD I STOP HAVING SEX WHILE PRACTICING QIGONG?

There is a section in this book that deals in more detail with the topic of sexuality of Qigong. But overall, one should totally refrain from sex during the first 100 days of practice to establish a firm Qi foundation. After that, one can resume sexual activity but at a regulated and proper rate. There are also charts in this book that can be used as a reference.

For serious Qigong workout such as Zhanzhuang, one should not have sex two days prior to training and 3 days after training. This is a requirement for higher-level Qi practitioners only. At a lower level, it really does not matter. At a higher level, the Qi is already circulating and an empty vessel will create system problems. This has been likened to that of a car running without oil. Initially it will work but it won't last. The damage will show pretty soon.

41. WHILE PRACTICING QIGONG, CAN I CONTINUE TO HAVE SEX IF I DON'T EJACULATE?

Yes but is not advisable to do so. Whenever one is engaged in sexual activity without ejaculation, he must gently massage the lower abdomen area with warm water for half an hour. This will ease all the build up of sexual energy (sperm). As you can see, it is not worth the trouble. The easiest is not to have sex when you shouldn't.

42. HOW DO I DEAL WITH THE WHOLE SEX ISSUE IF I AM SERIOUS ABOUT QIGONG?

Well, good question! If you are serious about Qigong, you cannot ignore it. It is a major ingredient in the Qigong process. There are 4 stages (see Stages Chapter for details) that we must be concerned with when practicing Qigong. One is the stage of

"Cultivating the Essence Into Qi." This is the first and most important stage. Without achieving this stage, we cannot progress to the next. In this stage, the "Essence" is sperm. Of course, it does not merely mean the substance "sperm". Sperm is used both literally and analogically. For a male practitioner, the sperm is a vital substance. It is the essence of the life. Life come from it and will go with its cessation (exhaustion). The giving of sperm is also the giving of one's life to another. As an analogy, this principle tells us to cultivate the most vital part of our body in order to preserve life.

This topic has almost always been discussed as a metaphor because modern people with scientific thinking cannot accept that the sperm can be turned into Qi. For what it is worth, the process is as follows:

Standing Post (Zhanzhuang) provides the basic structure. This structure is referred to as the setting up of the furnace. When in Standing Post posture, one must round the crotch area to make a rounded hollow there. Then all the other physical attributes are followed<sup>111</sup>. Standing like this for extended hours (sometimes as long as 4 hours in one session), one will start feeling heat in the Dantian area. Continue until the Dantian becomes extremely hot. We are talking about heat that you believe you cannot possibly bear but you have to bear it. At this time, when you circulate the Small Heaven, the sperm will join the circle. It will go pass the Huiyin point, which is the hottest spot in the furnace. There is a sensation that the sperm evaporates at Huiyin and becomes something like steam. It rushes in a split second up the Weilu point and then up the DU meridian. It goes all the way up to the brain. This process is called "Return the Sperm"<sup>112</sup> to Nurture the Brain".

At this point, we have to substitute the word

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<sup>111</sup> These will be discussed elsewhere in this book.

<sup>112</sup> In females, the source that generates Qi is the blood.

"Essence" with "Sperm" because that is the original word. People have used "Essence" to make it sound better and more plausible but that will only cause misunderstanding. Regardless of whether this makes scientific sense, one has to consider it seriously. Otherwise, the whole idea of Qigong does not have any foundation.

Ancient Qigong masters, from their personal experiences, believe that the sperm is actually produced in the form of the purest essence in the brain. Substance naturally attaches itself to this pure energy. The new sperm (undesirable substance and the pure energy bind together) descends down along the spine to the Huiyin area and becomes what scientists can identify as sperm. That is the essence of life. Therefore, their pursuit has been to return this substance in its original light pure form back to the brain. This, according to them, is the way of eternal life. This is the single most important point that discredited Qigong in the eyes of modern science today in both China and in the West.

With this view in mind, I advise Qigong practitioners to be at least cautious when dealing with sexual energy or matters.

#### 43. HOW CAN I PRESERVE MY SPERM?

This question covers several sub-questions. First of all, we have talked about the need to restrain from excessive sex (elsewhere in this book). Secondly, you will become very potent from conservation. When you reach a potent stage and continue to practice, you will experience erection<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> At this stage, the practitioner will have illusions about this occurrence. It is common for one to feel that the genital can extend several feet long. But of course in reality it is not true. However, this feeling does indicate a level of Qi in the body. I first heard about this when I started the Hunyuan Qigong System from Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang. One of the students in the Temple of Earth training group made such remarks this during a conversation. I was quite annoyed about this at the time. Time and practice have proven that this is a stage in the development of Qi.



during practice. This is not a bad thing. However, you must learn to control yourself. The method is in four little words: suck, stick, capture and close. You pull your anus and the surrounding area up while inhaling. This is to **suck**. You inhale so much that you can feel the belly button touching the back of your spine. This is to **stick**. You move your attention from the erection to the Dantian while doing the above. This is to **capture**. You then hold your position for a few seconds. The ability to hold this position will increase with practice. This is to **close**.

These techniques are not easy to execute. You must be patient. Try them and make adjustment slowly. You must also have qualified instructors to guide you. Thirdly, you will also have to deal with nocturnal emission. Even when you can control and redirect your mind during the day, you will have a harder time when asleep. There is nothing abnormal about nocturnal emission. We are dealing with the case that is only relevant to the practice of Qigong. For example, you normally do not have this problem, but started having it after several months of practice. This is the stage of **"when the vessel is full, the water will overflow."** The main practice of Qigong is to turn the sperm into Qi so we cannot let the sperm discharge away uselessly. We must remedy this problem. You should also practice the four-word practice before going to sleep each night.

44. WHAT IS AN IDEAL LOCATION FOR PRACTICING QIGONG?

First of all, outdoor is better than indoor practice. If at all possible, do not practice indoors. I know this is almost impossible for some locations such as Winnipeg and Edmonton in Canada. It is too hot outside in the summer and there are too many mosquitoes. In the winter, it is too cold. Secondly, fresh air is important. You should find a place with trees. Even when you have to practice indoors, grow some natural plants in the place where you normally

practice. When practice outdoors, coniferous trees (such as pines and firs) are desirable as they produce lot of positive Qi<sup>114</sup>. Thirdly, you must find a place that is quiet. When you practice, you should not be disturbed by sudden noise. Playing music that you like is acceptable. You can listen to nice and flow type of music such as Chinese classic string music and many of the nature sounds type of music that are now readily available on the market. If you are using a CD player for music, you can use the loop (continuous place) feature to ensure that the music does not stop suddenly during your practice. Sudden noise and sudden stop in sound that you are accustomed to are equally detrimental. When you are practicing indoors, make sure that you turn off the ringer of your phone if it is a high time to receive phone calls.

45. WHAT KIND OF SURFACE SHOULD I PRACTICE ON?

The best surface is earth (dirt, soil). In the West, lawns are the same as earth and even better. If you have to practice on cement, you must wear shoes that are flat soled but at the same time can provide cushioning for you. When you are practicing on carpet, you can practice either bare-foot or in socks. You don't have to wear shoes. You should also select flat surface over bumpy surface. You must avoid cement like a plague. Cement has the ability to suck the energy<sup>115</sup> off you from your feet, thus your body. While we are on this topic, I might add that at no time should you sit or lie on cement without thick cushioning. Sleeping on cement can cause arthritis. This is a very important point to remember because many of our young people in the West like to feel the cold in the summer. It is more comfortable but very harmful at the same time. This also applies to the

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<sup>114</sup> What I mean here is that this is the kind of Qi that is most needed by humans. Other types of Qi (negative) belong to the Yin type and should be avoided.

<sup>115</sup> This is an example of the negative Qi at work.

consumption of cold drinks such as slurpee and the use of a lot of ice in pop. The use of ice in alcoholic beverages is an exception as the positive Qi in the alcohol can equalize the negative Qi in ice.

Further explanation on this point. People under the age of 40 should have no problem consuming cold drinks because they are still filled with positive Qi that can counter the cold. After the age of 40, however, people start their road on the decline of Qi energy. At this point, the consumption of cold drinks will cause severe strains to the system. Too many valuable resources will be devoted to combat the negative Qi. In this view, I suggest that even for younger people, regulated consumption of cold drinks should be of importance to us.

46. WHAT IS THE BEST TIME OF THE DAY FOR QIGONG PRACTICE?

According to ancient Chinese calculations, the day is divided into 12 hours, not 24 hours. This way each Chinese hour had two of our modern day hours in it. The 4 cardinal hours are the best times for Qigong practice. These four hours corresponds to the four seasons in the year. Mao Shi in the morning is the spring; Wu Shi at noon is the summer; You Shi in the evening is the fall; and Zi Shi at midnight is the winter.

In the spring (morning), the world is starting to grow; at noon (summer) the world becomes most prosperous in life; in the fall (evening) the world bears fruits and grains; and in the winter (midnight), life force and energy are stored for the next cycle.

My personal experience is that in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (mountain time zone), 3:00 to 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon was the strongest time for my Qigong practice. There could be a host of reasons. Nevertheless, it was my experience for many years. I also personally believe that the idea of time change during different time of the year, such as summer time and wintertime, and the division of time zones in

the West are in line with Daoist practices. Unfortunately, China follows only one time zone for administrative reasons.

At the beginning of one's Qigong practice, these times are not really important. Any time is just as good. As one progresses, these time distinctions will become more consequential to the learner. As a general rule, the first 4 months of training can be quite independent of many of the restrictions outlined, except the requirement of restraint from sexual activity<sup>116</sup>.

I put this down here in a table for easy reading. The 4 with stars in front are the important times for practice.

*Zi Shi	23:00-1:00	End of Yin and beginning of Yang Gall Bladder
Chou Shi	1:00-3:00	Liver
Yin Shi	3:00-5:00	Lungs
*Mao Shi	5:00-7:00	The rising of Yang Large Intestines
Chen Shi	7:00-9:00	Stomach
Si Shi	9:00-11:00	Spleen
*Wu Shi	11:00-13:00	End of Yang and beginning of Yin Heart
Wei Shi	13:00-15:00	Small Intestines

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<sup>116</sup> By this I am referring to the 100-day foundation training in most Qigong practices. During the first 100 days, the learner must refrain from all sexual activities. This is to fully charge the sperm supply in the body, a step for "turning the essence into Qi".

Shen Shi	15:00-17:00	Bladder
*You Shi	17:00-19:00	The rising of Yin Kidneys
Shu Shi	19:00-21:00	Pericardium
Hai Shi	21:00-23:00	Triple Burners

47. WHICH WAY SHALL I FACE WHEN I PRACTICE QIGONG?

One should roughly face the Sun during Qigong sessions. This means: facing East in the morning; south at noon, west in the afternoon and north at night. When the Sun is too hot and bright, one should also avoid facing the Sun directly.

48. WHAT IS FANGSONG?

Fangsong is to relax. The difference is that because Fangsong is a crucial and important part of Qigong, it is further divided into many levels. So the word Fangsong means "relaxation" but it encompasses much more in detail than the word "relaxation". We have seen similar cases when we compare languages. For example, there are several dozen words describing snow in the Inuit language of the north. In English, the word snow is a general word.

I will not go into the detailed levels here. In general, there are 18 different levels of Fangsong. If one can reach the 18th level, he/she will totally immerse with the Dao. Our normal physical attribute is stiffness. As a matter of fact, our society and social norms dictate that the stiffer the more desirable. In Qigong practice, we must Fangsong the ligaments, tendons, bones, skins, flesh, inner organs, and all joints. Once a person starts learning, he/she will always feel that he/she has achieved the requirement

of Fangsong. It is not so. On the one hand, he/she is right. On the other hand, there is no end in the practice of Fangsong. One has to continue to strive for better Fangsong.

After the body is totally relaxed, one must start doing the same with the mind. We all know how hard it is for us to relax our mind in a fast paced modern society.

Once both the body and mind are relaxed, the person will exhibit control over his/her body. He/she will no longer experience stiffness or fatigue during practice. The body will start to float, as if all movements are totally on their own. If by chance, the body comes into contact with another person, there will be automatic emission of Qi into the other person.

In Taiji, this ability is called "Peng". It is referred to as a kind of mysterious strength that only comes through many years of Taijiquan practice. All Qigong true practitioners and masters can exhibit this ability. Not all will know about this because their main concern is usually not strength, power and martial arts based.

49. ONCE THE BODY IS TOTALLY RELAXED, SHOULDN'T THE BODY JUST COLLAPSE THEN?

It is almost true. In reality, when the body is relaxed, the physical form no longer confines the energy in the body. This means that Qi will naturally rise. When this happens, the body will appear to be suspended from the top. In Taijiquan, this state is called "**Xu Ling Ding Jin**", which means "Empty, Agile, and Top-pulled". At this stage, the body will also have perfect straight alignment from the Baihui point on the head to the Huiyin point in the crotch. However, this is because of the Qi movement, not because the practitioner physically erects the body or spine. So in this manner, the body will not collapse.

50. HOW SHALL I PRACTICE DURING DIFFERENT SEASONS?

In winter, you must avoid wind. Wind can

penetrate your garments and find ways to get to your skin. During your Qigong state, your pores are fully open and the body is generally warm. This will give wind a way into your body. Wind in the winter is cold and if it penetrates into your body, it will cause severe imbalances. Besides wind, you must also ensure that you are warmly but loosely dressed. If necessary, you should wear a hat and gloves. It is a good idea to layer your garments so that when you are hot, you can remove some layer and when you are cold you can add some layer. This is a tedious process but it is a necessary one. After practice, do not wash or shower in hot water. Warm water is preferred.

When it snows in winter, you should practice indoors.

In the summer, you should also avoid wind. I am repeating the word "wind" so many times because it is important. According to the ancients, we should **"Avoid the wind as if they are enemy arrows!"** That is how serious this issue is!

In many parts of Canada the mosquitoes are very bad in the summer seasons. I know in one city they call mosquitoes their provincial birds. I am not talking about mosquitoes though. I am talking about insect repellents. DO NOT use insect repellent during Qigong practices! When you practice, you want to reach a level that the body is fully relaxed. That is the stage that the pores are fully open. I don't know what you should do if you want to practice outdoors in the summer but are around mosquitoes. I personally will use a mosquito net over and around my body. In the summer, do not shower in cold water after practice. Take a warm water shower instead. Sweating is also a problem during summer. Use tranquil method as a main form of practice.

Ensure that your head is dry. If there is rain, wipe your hair first. Spring and the fall are the best times for outdoor practice. You must seize the

moment, go out and practice in your backyard, on your porch, in the park and even in your front yard. Your neighbour is going to wonder what you are doing, but you can show off a bit, can't you?

51. HOW ABOUT EXTREME WEATHERS?

When there is lightening, storm, extreme cold or hot weather, you should not practice. Take a few days off. Read some books, do something leisurely. Wait until the extreme condition is over.

52. WHAT IS THE BEST BREATHING METHOD?

The best breathing method is called Early Heaven Breathing method. This sounds very lofty but actually mean you don't really worry about breathing. You do all other things so that someday the body will start breathing on its own.

53. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EARLY HEAVEN BREATHING, NORMAL BREATHING, ABDOMINAL BREATHING, AND REVERSED BREATHING?

If you do some more research, you will find more terms than I have listed. There is heel breathing, pore breathing, hollow breathing, and so on and so forth. This list can be so long that you cannot exhaust it. What does this mean? It means breathing is a very important part of Qigong. I personally go as far as saying that **Breathing Is Qigong!** But I caution you to be careful. Breathing is very important. So much so that you don't want to make a mistake about it. If you mess up your breathing, you are going to do more harm than good.

Here is a story about the peril of doing things wrong. A long time ago, people in Handan were famed for walking most elegantly in the country. Many people went to Handan just to learn how to walk properly. Like many other people, Mr. Liu went too. He was so determined to bring home the art of walking that during his learning time, he refused to walk his old way. Four months later, he went home on



all fours: he crawled home. He had forgotten his old way but did not learn the new Handan way of walking. Of course this story is far-fetched. The morale is, though, whatever you do, don't learn from Mr. Liu.

The key in Qigong is early heaven breathing. My personal approach<sup>117</sup> to this issue is to totally ignore it. Learning Qigong is not like switching from chopsticks to spoons and forks. It is like switching to eating food with your nose. (This analogy is used to show that it is virtually not a possibility). It is difficult and dangerous! If you are not careful, you will choke. Eating with your nose is hard enough, now you don't want to do that and breathe at the same time.

So learn the physical moves and ignore breathing. You can do that. Don't worry about it. Don't let other's theories concern you either. When you are walking and talking to friends at the same time, when you are reading a nice book and get totally engulfed by the story, do you breathe internally or externally? Do you breathe with your nose or your mouth? Do you breathe abdominally or in the chest? I bet you that you are not aware any of this? You are not even aware you are breathing at all. Breathing must be done in an unconscious and complimentary manner that it cannot be noticed. There can be no effort given to breathing. If there is, your breathing is bogus. It is not natural. It is contrived. You are going to choke on your own breathing. You are going to have a headache. You are going to be sick from doing it.

I have not answered the question yet because I do not need to know about the other breathing methods. I only need to know about early heaven breathing. Early heaven breathing is not breathing. It is being breathed! Now this is a weir concept! What do you mean by this? I mean when the body is really

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<sup>117</sup> This was taught by Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang.

relaxed, is doing Fangsong, it moves with the vibrations of the universe, or simply put, the air or space around it. At this time, the body is not making any effort at all. The body and the abdominal areas (that's the area we call Dantian) react to the pressure fluctuation of the universe. Or may be the universe is interacting with the Qi in the stomach. This interaction causes the stomach area to contract and expand. When it contracts, the frontal skin of the stomach almost touches the skin on the back of the spine. When it expands, the stomach simply opens up. This is open and close in its true and original meaning. When this happens, you will realize that these movements are not controlled by your mind or brain. They just happen. You are almost a non-participant in it. You are merely an observer of it. This is what I call "It breathes you!" What is this IT? I cannot answer that question right now. At the early stage, this open and close movement of the stomach is not linked to the intake and extrusion of air in the lungs. It will take time to synchronize this action into the air movement in the lungs. Once that is achieved, you can say you are doing early heaven breathing. That is what we want to do in Qigong.

# PARADIGM SHIFT

## 意识转变

As there are paradigm differences in Western and Eastern thinking, it is necessary to look into the basic premises of Qigong. You will find some concepts different, while others are in total contrast to Western beliefs. These differences are in the areas of tradition, culture, language, and in science. Efforts to view, to understand, to compare and to analyze Qigong in the framework of science will be, at best, perilous. This is because of the difference in thinking pattern (see relevant chapter on this subject).

This does not mean that those who read this book, or those who are pursuing the art of Qigong, should wholly adopt all that Qigong embraces. On the contrary, the only way of non-interference is through understanding.

The Daoist Qigong approach is fact based. It is not necessarily reproducible facts based. The ancient Qigong masters used tools of observation and imitation in their approach to Qigong. They did not use value judgements. They did not try to see how what they observed could fit into their frame of mind and life style.

Life is not viewed in manners of why, how and where it is going? It is viewed as a fact, a reality. This approach has produced a phenomenon called "Qigong". This discipline has no equal in Western ways and in Western science. Thus far, we have seen many attempts to view, judge, test and fit Qigong into the framework of Western science. Even when the scientists claim to be unbiased, they are. They cannot escape the restrictions of their discipline.

For example, a Daoist is not burdened with the judgement of whether the Earth is flat or a sphere. Asking for a definitive answer is futile because our understanding will also change and improve, as we know more. It is what we do

with the fact that there is Earth, not what we believe it is like.

Current attempts by scientists in China and in the West have been reduced to several simple experimentations under the guise of science to discredit the validity of Qigong. There have also been attempts by believers of Qigong to justify in scientific terms why it is valid. Both approaches are destined to be fruitless and baseless as their starting point is wrong.

Da Dao Wu Xing,<sup>118</sup> real Qi cannot be measured. What can be measured is only the chafe that is attached to the Qi. All scientific tests are based on repeatable results. Real Qi does not produce tangible results. Results are only the demonstration of impure Qi. As Dao itself cannot be named, once a name is given, it is not the Dao any more.

In this section I hope to espouse the key tenants, which I believe need to be understood. These are very strange concepts, but they must be understood and accepted before Qigong is understood.

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<sup>118</sup> The Great Dao has no physical property.

## EVERYTHING COMES OUT OF NOTHING (WU ZHONG SHENG YOU)

無中生有

The foundation of the Chinese views on reality, including language, culture, and philosophy, is that everything that has physical property comes out of the emptiness (Wuji). Wuji, alone, is the single truth. Physical matters, including human beings in our present form, are all illusions<sup>119</sup>. This emptiness is not the same as nothing. It is viewed as the mother of all things, the embodiment of all that will be created.

Look at this example. Put your hands out. Place them about a foot apart. Now you see there is a space in between the two hands. You can say that this space is “nothing”. This is the nothing as in “everything comes out of nothing.” If we disregard the air and whatever other substance there is between your hands, there is only empty space. This empty space has nothing in it. There is no difference for this space whether you place your hands there, as we indicated above, or not. In relations to your hands, this nothing is not the absolute nothing any more. It is a “defined” or “restricted” NOTHING. It is defined by the placement of the two hands there. Also, this nothing/space now also defines the relationship between the two hands.

Therefore, “Wu” is not NOTHING. It is everything before they take on a shape. In Western terms, this empty “Wu” can be viewed as an abstract concept like the conceptual framework for things. It has no shape, nor physical property. But it is inevitable that with this framework, all is created.

Without shifting to this new paradigm, there can be no understanding of any Qigong theory, which is based on this fundamental premise of Daoism.

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<sup>119</sup> This is different from the Western concept of the word. It means temporal and non-lasting.

Unlike the theory of creation, “Wu Zhong Sheng You” theory does not specify a beginning. Wu<sup>120</sup> is merely a state that is different from that of the You<sup>121</sup>. It is difficult to comprehend this concept. If we use space as a point of reference, it will be easier to see the point the ancients tried to make. “You” refers to the state that within the same space, something exists. “Wu” refers to the same space with nothing in it. Therefore, the “Wu” referred to by Lao Zi, actually means the true negativity. This concept did not come into the realm of understanding in the West until quite recent.

In this view, the concept of “Wu” does not contradict science. In science<sup>122</sup>, we believe that matter cannot be destroyed. It is merely transformed. For example, when a desk is GONE, we only mean that the physical shape of that desk does not exist any more. The matter that made up that desk still exists in other forms. It could be in the form of chopped up wood, or as heat generated from the burning of the wood.

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<sup>120</sup> Here it refers to non-existent”, there is not.

<sup>121</sup> Here it refers to “Existence”, or reality.

<sup>122</sup> This point is merely given as an analogy, not as a scientific analysis. I am not equipped to analyze in scientific terms.

## THE GREAT DAO HAS NO SHAPE (DA DAO WU XING)



In Daoism, the first pair in the division of Yin and Yang is Heaven and Earth. It is said that those that are heavy sink down to form a physical reality, which is the Earth; those that are light rise up to form Heaven. Therefore, the concept of Heaven and Earth is not that of what we normally refer to. Earth refers to that that has substance while Heaven refers to that which has no substance. Heaven does not have the connotation of a "paradise" like place.

Heaven is considered all that is above the Earth (as low as 1 hair off the ground). The ancients measured the distance between Heaven and Earth as 86,000 Li<sup>123</sup>. This is also purported to be the exact distance between the centre of the Heart and the centre of the Dantian. It is measured at 8.6 inches<sup>124</sup>. Women have an advantage in learning Qigong because their distance between Heart and Dantian is shorter.

The Great Dao belongs to that of the Yang substance. Therefore, it is high above us. It cannot be seen, or touched, or known. This is an important point for Qigong practitioners because Qigong is a derivative of the Dao. The cultivation of Qi is the path to the Dao. They are one of the same.

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<sup>123</sup> A Chinese measurement. Today, it is 0.5 kilometer. Exactly what that measurement was in ancient times, we do not know.

<sup>124</sup> The Chinese word is Cun. In medical terms, one cun is the distance of the second knuckle of the middle finger. Just exactly what THIS cun refers to in Qigong, is not known either.

## THE GREAT DAO IS EXTREMELY SIMPLE (DA DAO ZHI JIAN)

大道至简

The evolution of life is from simple to complex. In traditional studies such as "Yi Jing" (the Book of Changes<sup>125</sup>), in martial arts and in Qigong, this has been described prevalently as:

Wuji gives rise to Taiji; Taiji gives rise to the Three Treasures; the Three Treasures then created the "Four Shapes"; The "Four Shapes" evolved into the "Five Basic Elements"; in turn it goes on like this: "Six Harmonies"; "Seven Stars"; "Eight Diagrams"; "Nine Palaces" and then "Wuji" again.

Each school has its unique way of elucidating the above wisdom from the past. Justification according to the clarification of the attributive words will only lead to partial understanding of the meaning of this process, like that of the blind men and the elephant. They are correct in a way, but are not entirely correct<sup>126</sup>. It must be understood that the ancients did not intend to talk about such mundane things as harmonies and shapes. They simply used them to illustrate their understanding of the universe. This understanding is that *"everything progresses from simple to complex"*. In numeric form, this is written as: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and  $\infty$ . Once we understand this point, we will not be fraught and troubled with the discrepancies in explanations.

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<sup>125</sup> This book is sometimes referred to as "I Ching."

<sup>126</sup> The author is of the strong opinion that understanding MUST be the result of personal experiences that are accumulated with training. This means that the sequence of learning must be actual activity and then compared to the principles that others (forefathers) have borne out for verification. The currently popular method of learning the principles and then trying to produce those principles through personal practice will not lead to understanding or enlightenment. This is a topic that will be repeated in this book but will be thoroughly discussed in a separate book.



In accordance with the principle of reversal<sup>127</sup>, which is the guiding presumption of the ancient immortals in their quest for longevity and immortality, the method of Qigong is “*from complexity to simplicity*”. Only when one can sort through the complex and find what is simple, will one be on the right path of enlightenment.

This is, however, not a SIMPLE task, as humans are programmed with a propensity for complexity. This is not a human fault, but a fallacy nonetheless. Other religions also have seen this point and have made tremendous effort in dealing with it. For example, in Western religion, every believer must make a direct connection with God. In Buddhism, one must learn to see the “Heart of the Buddha”.

Therefore, the way of the golden Dan is simple but not complex. Its content is emptiness. Its usage is tranquility. Action is its beginning while non-action is its result. This is the entire process. From beginning to end, there is nothing difficult. Unfortunately the people of today seek answers from afar when they are right under their nose. Things are easy but they make them difficult. They face the dark and turn away from the bright. How can they achieve the Dao?

Daoists also have their ways of simplifying life. Si Ma Cheng Zhen<sup>128</sup> in his “On Forgetting Through Sitting” summarized the following methods:

1. Respect and Faith
2. Sever Secular Ties
3. Retract the Heart
4. Simplify Life
5. See the Truth
6. Tranquility
7. Receiving the Dao.

On his visit to Canada in 1998, famous Chinese writer A Jun<sup>129</sup> offered me his way of dealing with stress of modern

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<sup>127</sup> This is a major tenant of Daoism. “If one wants to live, he has to start by being dead.”

<sup>128</sup> Tang Dynasty Daoist. His other name is Bai Yun Zi, the White Cloud Child.

society. Whenever you are confronted with an emergency, you ask yourself or whoever is concerned, "Is somebody going to die?" If the answer is "no", then you have plenty of time to deal with it and you do not need to lose any sleep over it. He feels that in modern times, people mistake too many "luxuries as essentials". Indeed we are at a stage when we have forgotten what simplicity is. How can we ever find the "Simple Dao" by looking into the complex façade we make up? The answer is by seeing straight through the façade and find the simplicity underneath.

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<sup>129</sup> A Jun is his pen name. His real name is Wang Xuejun. He lives in Dalian, China. He is the author of many books including "Selected Works of A Jun" published in 1999 by Dalian Press.

## LONG LIFE AND ETERNAL STARE (CHANG SHENG JIU SHI)

長  
生  
久  
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The highest goal of Qigong training is to achieve longevity. Lao Zi refers to longevity as "Long Life and Eternal Stare". This is the idea of longevity in Daoism. It directly and clearly states immortality as the ever lasting of life. This concept cannot be interpreted, viewed, or adapted to suit the worldview of people of different ages.

Just how long is a long life? Lao Zi clearly stated in his "Dao De Jing", "Gu Shen Bu Si" (Spirit of the Valley Does Not Die). The Spirit of the Valley is an analogy for one who has achieved the Dao. He will have eternal life and will be able to see what is around him eternally. Peng Zu was said to have lived 800 hundred years. Zhuang Zi couldn't understand why people used Peng's name as an analogy for long life. After all, compared to the life of a mountain, Peng's life was like that of a gnat, who is born in the morning and dies in the evening, according to the human time.

Today, we don't know whether Lao Zi himself is still alive or for that matter, any of the immortals. However, we cannot change the meaning of what he said because of what we do not know.

Another important point about life in Daoism is that it does not refer to the life of the physical body. It refers to the spirit in the body. The task of the Qigong master is to cultivate this spirit until it becomes independent. For some time, it will continue to use the physical body, as a shelter but soon, it will have no more need for it. At that time, the spirit will "RISE"<sup>130</sup> from the body. This is the long life that is referred to by Lao Zi.

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<sup>130</sup> A master may continue to come back to the same body if the body is still usable. When the body becomes unusable, the master may either come back

The central focus of Daoism is about life itself, not about the origin of life and after life as in other religions. When the ancient sages and immortals examined the three stages of life (pre-birth, life and after death), they came to the conclusion that only the living years warrant enquiry. They therefore made a conscious decision to not pursue the questions of pre-life and after life. This is a major distinction that set the Chinese pursuit apart from that of others. Because of this, many Daoist Qigong masters today believe that only the Chinese Qigong system is a true science, actively seeking reasonable answers about life.

However, we must be reminded that this Daoist view on life does not exclude pre-birth and after-death possibilities. It's only a matter of choice for them. They did not make any value, ethical, or any other judgements on it.

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in energy form if the visit is short, or come back into a freshly diseased body, if he wants to stay in human shape for a long time. It is said that when Tie Guanli's spirit left his body during one of his qigong sessions, his disciples thought he had died. They then cremated his corpse. When he returned, he could not return to his body. He search around and found a fresh body of a street beggar. He took possession of that body immediately. That is why he always appeared as a beggar. Several immortals had been documented with similar experience.

## TRANQUILITY CAN ENLIGHTEN (JING NENG WU HUI)



We must also understand that in Daoist views, fact based accumulation of information is detrimental to human understanding and is not considered knowledge. It is part of the growth of complexity that will drive humans away from what is true. Then what is knowledge? It is considered the merging of the human spirit with that of the Dao (original spirit that created the universe). In another word, understanding and reaching the Dao is considered knowledge. In this context, the use of the word "enlightenment" in eastern countries is closer to the concept of knowledge than the meaning of the word in English.

In the phrase "Jing Neng Wu Hui", Jing means tranquility. "Neng" means can. "Wu" means "to come to sudden understanding" or to be enlightened". "Hui" means knowledge, wisdom.

So when we go into total tranquility, when our mind is "dead"<sup>131</sup> and our body is "dead", there will be wisdom and true understanding. This does not sound logical to the ears of the Westerner. Let me explain in simple terms (of course, explanations are never the same as the original text, something must be lost). The word "dead" does not literally mean the cessation of life or activity. It means the avoidance of "holding onto". Holding on to something gives rise to prejudice, discrimination and thus lack of understanding. We have noticed all too often that children learn faster, easier and effortlessly. Adults are seldom endowed with this ability. This is because children do not think. They do not reason. They do not decide and do not

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<sup>131</sup> Cease to act on its own. This concept has been referred to as the monkeys of the mind and horses of the body. Part of the problem is that the parts of the whole person, such as mind and body will always want to struggle for independence from the "person".

argue. They simply pick up whatever is in front of them and put them into their own memory. As children age, they have more and more things memorized in their brain and those memories are what we are "holding onto". Now instead of simply acquiring things, every time they are presented with new stuff, they compare it with what they have in possession in their memory. This process makes them unable to learn. This is why so many older people are so difficult to deal with. Because they know so much they do not know how to listen any more. They simply always tell others what to do. Of course those older people who continue to have the capacity for learning do not have this problem. The saying "one has to empty his cup before he can learn" illustrates exactly this point.

This presents us with a dilemma. If you don't know anything, you are capable of learning. But if you already know something, you cannot learn any more. How can one learn and continue to learn then?

The traditional Qigong method is to "relax the mind and body" and not to "hold onto". This "not to hold onto" is achieved by "holding onto the Dantian." This is a simple replacement trick. This will be explained later on in this book.

By gaining, storing, but not holding onto knowledge, we are actually building up intuitive knowledge. The knowledge is always there, in the background as reserve. This is why relaxing is not collapsing; Not using power is not having no power. A person with a million dollars in his bank account but only 20 dollars in his wallet is not a poor man. Though he does not physically have his money in his wallet. The money is there for him. It is actually accumulating interest.

## CULTIVATE THE JING INTO QI (LIAN JING HUA QI)

煉  
精  
化  
氣

After a fairly short period of training, the body will start to respond to the effort of the Qigong practice by showing the "eight senses" (see General Glossary). These feelings and the scale of the senses in the body will vary according to personal differences. This is the beginning of Qigong state.

As the "eight senses" increase, they will die down after reaching another level. In a sense, this means the initial "eight senses" stage is the creation stage of disorder. This condition will improve as the training increases. Finally, an order will come out of the chaotic Qigong state. This state of order is the opening of the "small heaven". When the "small heaven" is about to open, the body will go into a quieter mode while the Dantian area will heat up. This heat sensation will increase to such a degree that it will turn into Qi and then will start rushing up and down the body. The result of this Qi rushing through the body to find a way of movement is the joining of the DU meridian with the REN meridian (this process has been described in many literary references so it will be skipped here). What is worth mentioning is that there is not only one line of Qi movement that forms the "small heaven". There are nine more lines along the "small heaven" main line in the centre of the body. This is called the "Ten Golden Threads of Dan". Some schools call this the "Great Way of the Golden Dan"<sup>132</sup>

It is imperative that the practitioner does not study in full the theory of the "small heaven" because knowing what will happen will cause the mind to lead the Qi to move along a pre-determined path. If this occurs, it will cause certain

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<sup>132</sup> Dan has also been referred to as the elixir of life, in this case.

side effects (called Qi psychosis). In Daoist term, this is called “Too much fire will burn the Dan.”

The opening of the “small heaven” should be natural. “When the water is full, it will over flow” is a saying for this point. If the “small heaven” opens as natural overflow, there will be no side effect. In addition, this will occur effortlessly. When one seeks to have the “small heaven” open, he will experience difficulties. The difficulties are due to the fact that the conditions for its opening is not present yet.

When the “small heaven” is open, the practitioner will have many abilities that are not “humanly possible”. In today’s Qigong world, few people, in reality, have reached this level, though many make the claim. People who have joined their “DU” meridian with their “REN” meridian (analogous to the opening of “small heaven”) are not vulnerable to disease. Even under extreme conditions, they should have the ability to remedy the condition immediately. This ability was demonstrated by Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang in 1999, when he self healed an anklebone fracture within 3 days (see Chapter on Special Abilities in this book for more detailed information on this). The ability to show obvious reversal of aging is also a must in people of this level. Again, we point to masters such as Feng Zhiqiang. At the age 75, he looks and physically behaves like a 50-year old person.

When the “small heaven” opens, the “Mysterious Cavity” (Xuan Guan, see General Glossary of this book for further information on this subject) will appear. The position of Xuan Guan has caused one of the biggest debates in Qigong history. Each school has a different designated position for it. It seems that there will never be a consensus on this issue. There does not have to be because there is no fixed position for it. It is not the absolute position of it that is significant. Rather, it is the fact that it exists. When a person experiences it in the body, it signifies a stage in the cultivation of Qi. In ancient times, this process was referred



to as “the setting up of the furnace” by Daoist Internal Dan alchemists<sup>133</sup>.

Physically, when this level is achieved, there will be self-pumping of a specific point of the body in spiral and vortex-like movements. This is the level when designations of future development are clearly shown. If the Xuan Guan appears in the middle Dantian, the practitioner will continue to cultivate to reach a higher level in Qi quest. If the Xuan Guan appears in the upper Dantian in between the eyebrows (in this case 3 inches in front of the point), the practitioner will have extra-ordinary abilities related to vision such as seeing auras and lights around a person.

This is also the level where most people get into a static state, thus not progressing. Most practitioners turn into healers, martial artists, hermits, alchemists, and others.

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<sup>133</sup> This reference usually appears at the beginning of any Daoist alchemy writing. This shows just how elementary but important this process is for Internal Dan cultivation. And yet few in history have reached this level.

**CULTIVATE THE QI INTO THE SPIRIT (LIAN QI HUA SHEN)**  
**THE DEVICES ARE SET UP (NEI WAI JI QI)**

炼  
气  
化  
神

As his ability further improves, the practitioner will start expressing energy outside of his body. This is called the internal and external harmonization. Because this ability is not present in people under normal circumstances, the person with this ability will experience abnormal phenomena such as heaviness, lightness, smoothness, roundness, astringency, floating (as in no gravity) and falling. When moving, he will also feel as if he is being moved, instead of moving on his own. He will feel as if there are things inside each joint turning all the time. Whenever, the hands are moving, there is always a ball in between them. The size of the ball changes according to the distance between the two hands. At this time, when doing Qigong moves, the hand movements on the outside of the body can cause the inside of the body to feel being physically moved by the hands. The joints will crack like firecrackers when moving the limbs in Qigong state. When moving along the wrong path, the body will respond with sharp pain.

All these are because the Qi inside the body and the space outside of the body are merging into one dimension. The space outside of the body that is covered under this condition can vary from person to person. If a patient spends time in close proximity of the Qigong practitioner, his disease will disappear mysteriously. The practitioner at this stage will see a clear Taiji sign in his Dantian and the same sign clearly shows up in his palm.

If the practitioner has achieved tranquility in his mind (mind-intent can fix onto one point), he will see the entire world revolving around him. If he has not achieved this, then he will feel that he is spinning around by himself.

In Hunyuan Qigong, this is the level when the practitioner can create 18 balls in the body. They all rotate independently and yet they all rotate in coordination with one another.

### **THE LARGE HEAVEN VIBRATES (DA ZHOU TIAN DONG)**

The prelude to the opening of the "Large Heaven" is the "Vibration of the Six Roots" (Please see the Glossary Chapter of this book for further information on this). One precaution is that the six roots must all vibrate at the same time. Similar reactions with one or more of the faculties (roots) do not constitute this stage. The result of the six roots vibrating and shaking in concert in this way will produce a gush of strong Qi in the Dantian to move into one of the meridians. With time, this gush of strong Qi will circulate through all the meridians in the body including the 12 major meridians and the eight mysterious meridians. This action will continue until all the meridians in the body are linked into a big loop by this gush of Qi. At this time, three strands of Qi movements will be created in the body: one is the Early Heaven Qi; one is After Heaven Qi and the other is the Illusionary Qi. Both Early Heaven and After Heaven Qi strands are in the body while the Illusionary Qi strand is outside of the body. It is called so because it is not in the body, but it is real. These three strands of Qi would be a discussion in a separate book.

### **THE SHAPE BECOMES SHAPELESS (ZU QIAO SHI XING)**

After the "Large Heaven" is reached; the practitioner can turn the Qi into Spirit. At this stage, his Zuqiao point will start bulging and then cave in. The eyes have been called the souls of the body by ancient Daoists. As the point that is closest to the eyes, the Zuqiao cavity is the house of the Spirit. Only after the "Large Heaven" has been activated, can the Spirit come to the Zuqiao to rest. At this level, the practitioner will have eyes that are like that of a sword. The ancients called this ability the possession of the "secret sword" that can repel evil spirits. This Spirit can express physical power.

In the summer of 2000, when giving a workshop in Finland, a student unexpectedly attacked Grandmaster Feng<sup>134</sup>. As usual, during pushing hands, Grandmaster Feng had his eyes closed. Bystanders saw that Feng opened his eyes; a beam of light came out of his eyes. It sent the assailant flying into a tree trunk nearby. No one saw Grandmaster Feng move and change posture when this happened<sup>135</sup>. This is an example of the power of the Spirit. This also answered a question an American asked me a year ago. After Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang's photo was featured on the Tai Chi Magazine in the summer of that year, this person asked me why his eyes showed a lot of intense power. He was puzzled because he thought a Taijiquan master should show peace at all times.

In martial art reality, this is the level when the master loses his form. His moves will be composed of pure energy. He will not appear to move his body in the normal way that is prescribed. In January of 2001, I was in Beijing with Grandmaster Feng for a week of further studies. I noticed quite a strong discrepancy between what he required me to do and what he was doing himself. He was telling me the importance of rotating the Kua (pelvic bone area in general) while sitting in a chair. As I could not detect any movement from his demonstration, I requested to touch him. On touching his hip, my hand met a strong wave of energy that repelled my whole body back. I felt exactly what he was instructing but definitely, I, or the other two persons present (Yaron Seidman and Thomas Yeung) could not see any of that.

It has been said in Taijiquan practice that the procedure is to train from no movements to movements and then back to no movement. This is that movement with no movement stage.

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<sup>134</sup> After the event, the attacker said that he was just getting bored and wanted to use a surprise attack to see what Feng would do. All who were present agreed that there was no ill-intent on the part of the attacker.

<sup>135</sup> My disciple in New York, Yaron Seidman, related this story to me. He attended the workshop and was present with a few others when this event happened.

## **CULTIVATE THE SPIRIT INTO EMPTINESS (LIAN SHEN FAN XU)**

### **THE ORIGINAL SPIRIT COMES OUT OF THE GATE (YUAN SHEN CHU GUAN)**

炼神返虚

After the "Large Heaven" is open and the physical properties of the practitioner start to disintegrate, he will enter into a stage where his Yuan Shen (original spirit) will come out of the body. The practitioner has mastered the Dingli (power of focus). He will cease to know or feel the existence of self. He has indeed become part of the whole universe. From the outside, he will not be seen as doing anything special. His body is totally tranquil. He will cease to breathe. His Yu Yan (third eye) is open and he has extraordinary ability towards what is around him. For himself, he can clearly see a Taiji ball inside his Dantian. This ball started as a red ball in the Huiyin. Gradually it rises up to the Dantian. It becomes translucent and then transparent. By the time it reaches the Dantian, it becomes crystal clear. It continues to move

up the body. It does not go along the meridians. It moves in slow motion directly up the centre of the body. As it moves up, its rotation accelerates. By the time it reaches the Baihui point, it rotates so fast that the movements cannot be seen. Then it goes out of the Baihui and rests on top of the head. The ball then opens up into the petals of a flower (a Buddhist will definitely say it looks like a lotus flower). On top of the flower petals, sits a golden child. This, in Buddhism, is described as the Buddha.

Many Daoists and Qigong masters regard this stage as the highest level of achievement. In Qigong, it is called rushing the Great Pass. This is called so because there are three similar, but small passes in the opening of the "small heaven". Normally, this level cannot be achieved unless there is protection from a master of greater ability. The use of

mind-intent is strictly prohibited. Mind-intent is one of the most useful tools for earlier stages of cultivation but by this stage, it is a wrongful and detrimental technique. The real mind-intent, which is the nature of the person, must be used.

### **THE GOLDEN CHILD LEAVES THE BODY (YING ER LI TI)**

The "Golden Child" will become stronger and will start venturing around the body for "fun", much like a child playing around. This will continue and the distance from the body will lengthen. As the "Golden Child" carries all the information from the practitioner and is part of the practitioner, the practitioner will have full control of it. The practitioner knows what "It knows, sees and feels." This will give the practitioner extraordinary ability.

Grandmaster Hu Yaozhen used to sit in the school with disciples sitting around him while he "ventured out to see what was happening in Beijing." He would tell his disciples stories that would prove to be true the next day. It was this way that Grandmaster Hu "checked out Grandmaster Chen Fake." Hu told his disciples that there was one man in Beijing, who knew genuine Taiji. When he recommended Feng Zhiqiang to study from Chen Fake, Hu had not met Chen Fake yet but he promised his disciple that this master Chen was an outstanding master with real knowledge of Taijiquan of the Chen Style.

Just how far can the "Golden Child" travel and still be able to return to the original body? This question also touches upon the topic of immortal-hood. Immortals must be able to travel at least 2000 kilometres and return safely into his body. This is possible because at a higher level of cultivation, the practitioner possess both yin and yang in the body and in the space around him. This ability collapses our physical space. Therefore, they have the ability to go and see things that occur thousands of miles away. This ability to travel does not mean our conventional idea of travelling. It means to be able to be at another location at the same time. The space or distance in between is folded.

This ability to fold space cannot be experienced in high-level Taijiquan push hands abilities. The process is not

that of Qigong emitted to a far distance. Rather the master can penetrate the space between his hand and the opponent's body. When I was teaching a workshop in Tulsa in November of 2001, I noticed that many of the people who pushed hands with me "back off when I point my finger at certain parts of their body." This would occur when my finger was about one to 3 feet away. When I related this discovery to Richard Johnson in Bentonville, Arkansas, he confirmed this finding. As he is my disciple, I was obliged to explain to him the truth. I explained that the students were scared of me, thus exhibiting such reactions.

Richard Johnson felt that while fear and psychological factors could be part of the reasons, he did personally "feel being physically touched" by my finger.

Grandmaster Hun Yaozhen could not only see thousands of miles away, but also see into the future and past. One day, he told students about an event that occurred in Nanjing, more than a thousand kilometres south of Beijing<sup>136</sup>. A week later, the event was carried as news in the Beijing Evening News (a local newspaper).

Seeing the coming of the disastrous "Cultural Revolution" of Mao Zedong, Hu left Beijing, and in a way the world, to his own domain. When he was leaving, he told disciples including Feng Zhiqiang, that a great event was taking place in China. It was an event of monstrous proportion. Many people would die and the country would be cast into total darkness. He told them that it was not his time, nor his fight. He was leaving for good. He asked them to look after themselves and try not to get involved in the evil.

When news came from his town that he had died in his sitting meditation pose, Feng understood what he was told. The turmoil in China that was termed the "Cultural Revolution" also confirmed what Hu told his students on his departure.

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<sup>136</sup> At the time, there was no radio and TV reporting of daily news. Anything within one month was considered news.

But why do Daoists see a “Golden Child” at this level, not other beings or objects? There is no “Golden Child” to speak of. It is only an energy form. The identity is given according to the personal experiences of the practitioner. Most Daoists (all Chinese people for that matter) already have this “Golden Child” image in their mind as a preset. Therefore, when they experience this energy form, they will naturally attribute it to the “Golden Child”.

Humans are all pre-programmed to “want to conquer this fallible human body.” Any possibility to reach beyond it will give credence to strong desires<sup>137</sup> to pursue it. When the “Golden Child” can travel freely outside of the body, there is a strong possibility that the practitioner will desire to stay “out there” rather than returning to the body. Again, this is why at higher levels of pursuit, the idea of emptiness from all energy, ability and desires, has a much more significant meaning.

At this level, if the energy of the “Golden Child” is formed into a solid state, it becomes in physical form as a “She Li Zi”, an object found in high-level Qigong masters after their deaths. Scientists have failed so far to identify the nature of these pebble stone like objects. They are said to be of a “not this worldly” origin and quality.

### **UBIQUITOUS (YI WAN HUA SHEN)**

When the “Golden Child” matures, he appears to be an old man, like the picture of Lao Zi. Sometimes this old man looks like the practitioner, in which case, it is called “the Self”. At this stage, there will be thousands of human-like entities with various appearances around this old man. This phenomenon is called “Billions of Variations”. Only a practitioner, whose Jing, Qi and Shen have reached the purest level and meet on the Baihui point, will achieve this level. Other terms such as “The Three Flowers Meet on the Top,” refer to the same stage.

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<sup>137</sup> These are not natural desires. They belong to the realm of delusional Dan.



## **CULTIVATE THE EMPTINESS INTO THE DAO (LIAN XU HE DAO)**

### **THE THREE SAGES COME TO PAY RESPECT (SAN SHENG LI YI)**



After the “Billions of Variations”, the practitioner will no longer feel the SELF. He is totally immersed in a constellation of beings. At this time, he is everything and everything is he. But there still is a sense of self-being because all beings are still centred on one being. That being is the practitioner, though he can no longer tell his own identity. Among all that are around, three stand out. They are in fact, the representations of Jing, Qi and Shen. They are in fact, the self.

### **THE THREE SAGES RETURNS TO ONE (SAN YUAN GUI YI)**

Eventually, these three will disappear. They actually go back into the self. They have become one. This is not a new one. This is not a new identity of the SELF. It is the original identity of the SELF before he was separated into Yin and Yang.

### **SHEDDING LIFE AND RETURN TO THE TRUE STATE (MIE SHENG GUI ZHEN)**

At this time, he can no longer recognize his own ego<sup>138</sup>. He has reached total separation from his physical identity. He has achieved total freedom from the human burdens and six desires (see General Glossary). He has become part of the Dao and his Spirit is returned to the primordial mix of Hunyuan. “Long life and Eternal State”<sup>139</sup> has been achieved.

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<sup>138</sup> I use this word to mean “self-image” or self-identity.

<sup>139</sup> Laozi’s words for eternal life.

# SECRETS OF THE BED CHAMBER

## 房中術

At a lecture on Qigong in Santa Cruz in the summer of 2001, the question of Qigong and sex came up. Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang did not avoid this subject, as many had predicted. On the contrary, he openly shared his opinion and knowledge on this subject.

In Qigong system, there is no total moral prohibition on intercourse or anything related to human sexual behaviour. Qigong masters have no concern for human "morality"<sup>140</sup>. Their pursuits are guided by only one thing: that is the way of the Dao. Therefore, human sexuality must fall within the confines of this Dao. According to this thinking, sex cannot possibly be an act of immorality. On the contrary, the Qigong master is concerned with the relationship between this act and immortality. Does it advance immortality or does it inhibit it?

The conclusion of the Qigong masters in the past is that sexuality inhibits the cultivation towards immortality. Human life in this view is compared to that of a candle. The more you burn it, the less there is left. In the end, it will be burned out. Some ancient texts even go as far as putting a definitive number on intercourse. When that number is up, you are finished.

Based on this reasoning, Qigong masters advocate the idea of conservation in sexual matters. Total prohibition on sex is considered detrimental to human health. The general guideline of "following the way of the nature" applies to sex. It has always been believed that abandonment of sexual activity is contrary to the human physiology and will lead to problems in the Qi flow.

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<sup>140</sup> I am referring to cultural and tradition based morals that are not universally true.

At an advance stage in Qigong practice, however, sexual life will cease. This is possible because at this stage, the practitioner will have the ability to directly transfer the sperm into Qi, which is transported up to the brain (upper Dantian in the head) through the DU meridian in the spine. This route is termed the original watercourse. It is much easier for young people to achieve this than for adult men. It is believed that young men before reaching the time of sexual maturity have the natural watercourse already. It is when they start sexual practices that the watercourse is altered. To re-create an already altered watercourse is a tremendous undertaking.

Another reason that Qigong theory does not prohibit the enjoyment of sexual pleasure is that ultimately, Qigong practice IS a sexual activity. It is one that does not involve physical enhancement substances such as medicine and drugs. It does not even involve another person. It only involves one's own Qi energy and its circulation in the body. The true "small heaven"<sup>141</sup> is true orgasm without leaking out. Therefore, it is pure pleasure without end. The master said, "He who practices Zhanzhuang without finding the pleasure is an idiot." Of course wise masters will not elaborate on what this "pleasure" is. We need not to go too deep on this. It simply means sexual pleasure. This is the real reason why men and women are willing to spend their valuable time: standing in Zhanzhuang. Those who stood for nothing indeed are missing out.

In regard to sexual tendencies between men and women, it is believed that men should conserve while women should release. Men's lives are determined by sperm (Jing), which is limited. Women's lives are determined by blood, Xie, which is unlimited. If a man's energy is used up, he is in trouble. On the contrary, a woman's energy must be depleted for new energy to be made. Otherwise the energy will become stagnant and will cause problem in health.

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<sup>141</sup> Some call it the "micro-orbit circulation".

For men, this poses a huge problem. You want to maximize your sexual pleasure and frequency but by doing so you are going to die! Some ancient masters had suggested schedules to make the best out of the situation. Frequency charts were made. These charts directly show the philosophy of the masters on this subject.

Medicine immortal Sun Simiao<sup>142</sup> suggested the following:

<b>Age</b>	20	30	40	50	60
<b>Frequency</b>	4 days	8 days	16 days	20 days	No

The more commonly accepted schedule is more aggressive and liberal<sup>143</sup>:

<b>Health</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Age</b>
	20	30	40	50	60	70
<b>Strong</b>	1 day	1 day	3 days	5 days	10 days	30 days
<b>Weak</b>	1 day	2 days	4 days	10 days	20 days	No

As Qigong practice directly deals with the Qi circulation<sup>144</sup> and therefore human sexuality, the requirements are different for practitioners than for other people. At the beginner level, a Qigong student can safely live a normal life as before. When a relationship between sperm and Qi circulation is established (this is not to say that sperm is turned into Qi), the practitioner must follow a stricter schedule.

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<sup>142</sup> See entry in "Glossary" of this book for more information on him.

<sup>143</sup> From the "Plain Girl Cannon". The above information was given when the Yellow Emperor asked the Plain Girl how to reconcile the idea of conservation of sperm required by the Dao with the desire to have offspring.

<sup>144</sup> That is assuming that the theory of "Turning the Sperm Into Qi" is correct.

# IMMORTALITY



The main focus of ancient Daoists practices was immortality. Qigong, Chinese medicine, chemistry, and even many aspects of the language and culture of China are all derivatives of this single-minded pursuit. The master said, "Immortality is the original motivation."

During the last two hundred years, the Chinese society has been exposed to foreign (mainly Western) influences. It has almost immersed with the ways of other countries in the world. Though there still is a strong and different culture in China (some may say that China is one of the last cultures that outsiders cannot understand), it is mainly a modern one.

To understand that (such as Qigong) which is Chinese, one needs to go back to the source. The source is the ideas and knowledge that were part of the obsessive pursuit for immortality. This knowledge is the result of observations and contemplation, not of logical reasoning. Thus they appear to be interesting, at best. To the logical mind, these ideas were all mistakes or dreams from the past.

However, strange they may appear, these concepts must be reckoned with, if serious attention is paid to the art of Qigong.

## WHAT IS AN IMMORTAL?

An immortal is one who has conquered life itself. Throughout history, there has been no definitive definition of the concept of immortality in writings such as research and biographical literature. We can only speculate what immortality means. This is largely the fault of secular writers who would not take away the veil of mystery. In Daoist alchemy descriptions from Daoist practitioners, however, there is no doubt that immortality has been described clearly

as the ever-ending continuance of life. Daoists used descriptions such as, "Long life wine"<sup>145</sup>; "Rise to the Heaven"<sup>146</sup>; "Long Life and Eternal Gaze"; and "No Death" for their pursuit. According to direct transmissions to me from various Qigong masters, especially that of Daoist inept, one has to possess all of the following abilities to be considered an immortal:

- ❖ A person has to live physically in the human form longer than the expected age. This usually means an average of 30 years longer than the life expectancy of the day. For example, that means, today a person has to live at least 115 years to be considered an immortal.
- ❖ A person has to be able to live virtually free of any ailment or disease.
- ❖ A person must have extraordinary ability.
- ❖ A person has to be above being mundane (totally free of human affairs). But he does not have to segregate himself from human life and society.

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<sup>145</sup> Refers to the cultivated saliva.

<sup>146</sup> Refers to the state when the spirit leaves the body and lives independently of the flesh.

## CATEGORIES OF IMMORTALS



As there is a large group of people cultivating towards immortality, they are not all the same. There are different levels and degree in their cultivation. According to the ancients, the task of becoming an immortal often will take many lives. This is based on the belief that life force does not cease. There are five levels of immortality. They are Ghost Immortals, Human Immortals, Earth Immortals, Spirit immortals and Heaven Immortals.

In this section, I will give a description to each level. I caution my readers that this information is provided for knowledge only. This does not present my personal views. It is my prerogative to provide authentic information to the readers.

### GHOST IMMORTALS



This is the least desirable way of cultivation. The spirit of the practitioner can be kept intact at the time of separation<sup>147</sup> but it remains a totally Yin spirit. This is the result of the cultivation of the Xing (mind) without the Ming (body). The desirable state of an immortal should be made up of pure Yang energy. Even in the Xing cultivation of the Northern School of Daoism, the spirit that comes from the cultivation is a pure Yang one. When people start cultivation practice too late in life or when the body is damaged beyond repair<sup>148</sup>, the Ghost Immortal will be borne out as a result.

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<sup>147</sup> This term is a euphemism for time of death. This is because at the time of death the spirit leaves the body. The genuine separation of Yin and Yang occurs. In cultivation, this does not mean the natural death. This is a death that is totally designed, planned and controlled by the practitioner.

<sup>148</sup> This is not the same as damage as defined by Western medicine terms. Damage is the depletion of vital energy. This is usually equal to physical ability but is not limited to it. For example, excessive sexual discharge will deplete original vital energy though the person doing it might not feel it.

## HUMAN IMMORTALS



This is the category that is most commonly known to us in our history and in the literature of Daoism. A person becomes a Human Immortal when he completes the stage of Lian Jing Hua Qi, or "Cultivate the Jing into Qi, (see Chapter on Stages of Qigong for further reference). In the Daoist cultivation system, this is only the initial stage. A considerable number of people in the last 2600 years have reached this level though not as many as is bragged about by many current masters<sup>149</sup>. The physical representation of this level is the ability of the practitioner to "Return to the Look of a Youth at an Advanced Age" and physically as strong as a young person at such an advanced age. Such a person can live much longer than the expected life expectancy<sup>150</sup> with total healthy quality life.

Human Immortals have not achieved the Dao. They have achieved one method in the category of Daoist cultivation. This could be:

- Avoidance of food
- Separation of emotions
- Drinking of the Jade Fluid (Saliva)
- Breathing
- Tranquility
- Focus of mind
- Collection of the Qi of the Sun and the Moon
- Stopping of human breathing
- Doing the non-doing.

At this level, the practitioner can reach long life but there is still an end to this life. The body has not achieved no-

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<sup>149</sup> According to self-proclaimed oral accounts, most Taijiquan and Qigong masters in China and in the West today have reached this level. From the description of this book, one can see clearly without any doubt that this is not a possibility.

<sup>150</sup> Under poor living conditions like that of China in the 1900's those who lived to the age of 90 with undiminished physical and martial ability were considered to have achieved this order. In today's term in the West, this should mean 105 years of age with the same abilities.



physical form. If there is form, it must disintegrate into no-form. So he dies.

### **EARTH IMMORTALS**

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Earth Immortals are at a considerable higher level in the Daoist cultivation. The prolongation of life is furthered. This is the level of Lian Qi Hua Shen, or "Cultivate the Qi Into Spirit." The Earth Immortal has not totally become a pure Yang body. There are still Yin elements in the body. This is the element that gives the body physical property.

He is extremely different from an ordinary person in that he always is full of spirit and can move like the wind. But his physical body is keeping him firmly on the ground (Earth). He does not have the ability to travel freely on land and in air. This is why he is called "Earth Immortal."

Lu Dongbin (Chun Yangzi) is regarded as an "Earth Immortal."

### **SPIRIT IMMORTALS**

This is the level of Lian Shen Fan Xu, or "Cultivate the Spirit into Emptiness," This is the completion of the Large Heaven<sup>151</sup>. The Spirit Immortal has gained a pure Yang body, so there is no physical body to speak of. His total self has transferred into his spirit. His physical body is either sitting in a cave like a piece of dry wood, or a statue. He has no more need for that body. There is no more life and death. He has the ability to travel on land and in air. He can still appear in visual physical form but his main form is that of emptiness. This is the highest level of

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<sup>151</sup> With our lack of devotion to cultivation today, it is not possible to have a large number of people at this level. Those who liberally consider themselves at this level should think twice before making this claim again.

Daoist cultivation that has been verified in history. The Eight Immortals<sup>152</sup> all reached this level.

### HEAVEN IMMORTALS



Heaven Immortals are also called “Golden Immortals.”

“When the universe dies, this one does not die with it<sup>153</sup>.” This is the highest level of Daoist cultivation. He who reaches this level has billions of bodies and reaches out to the furthest limits of the universe and beyond. There is no record or description of the procedure for reaching this level.

Out of total respect, Qigong masters of all ages and Daoist adepts all consider Lao Zi a “Heaven Immortal”. There is no verification of this.

The following table summarizes the stages of cultivation with the commonly used names given to the practitioners according to their levels.

Stage Name	English Stage Name	Immortal Names	Common Names
Lian Jing Hua Qi	Cultivate the Jing into Qi	Human Immortal	Zhen Ren The Authentic Man
Lian Qi Hua Shen	Cultivate the Qi Into Spirit	Earth Immortal	Zhi Ren The Ultimate Man
Lian Shen Fan Xu	Cultivate the Spirit to Return to the Emptiness	Spirit Immortal	Shen Ren The Spirit Man
Lian Xu He Dao	Cultivate the Emptiness Into the Dao	Heaven Immortal	Shen Xian The Immortal Man

The claim to immortality, no matter at which stage according to the above, is a serious one. Is there any proof that immortality is true in the sense that they did not die? The implication of the above claim is that there could be thousands of people around us from the ancient times, a scenario much like what is described in the movie “Highlander”. These are legitimate questions. However, these

<sup>152</sup> These are the 8 people who crossed the sea from Penglai. Shandong Province to the east. Please also see the General Glossary for details on each immortal.

<sup>153</sup> This is a quote from “Dao De Jing” by Lao Zi.

questions cannot be easily answered because the subject is not of a secular nature. The answer may be very simple to one who is part of the Daoist religion. To secular people, there could be no answer. First of all, the concept of life and death in Qigong and Daoist pursuit is not the same as that found in a dictionary.

According to what we have discussed above, there are two kinds of immortals. One is the kind that still has the physical body. The other does not have the physical body. They both have one thing in common. They do not live near urban civilizations. They live in the mountains. The mountains they inhabit are those with features that support their special life being. Immortals have pure energies in their body (just a form, not a body like that of a common man). This energy likes unpolluted air and likes to live in similar energy fields. These are the places remote from human centers. This energy likes purity and even weather conditions. They don't like the extreme cold of the far north (like the North Pole) and extreme heat of the south near the equator. So of the places they like are in deep mountains like the Hua Mountains, Wudang Mountains, Zhong Nan Mountains and the Taishan Mountains.

Many immortals reached immortality in these mountains while others received secret transmissions from immortals in these mountains. That is why when interviewed by reporters after defeating an American challenger; Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang said that there were better masters than him in the mountains<sup>154</sup>. Master Liu Weiming<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> In the early 1980s, there was an American martial artist who traveled to China to learn and to experience martial arts there. He did not meet any resistance until he met Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang. Reporters in China described Feng as the best fighter from the traditional lineage. He countered by giving the above statement.

<sup>155</sup> A fairly known master of Qigong in Shenyang. Master Liu remains single (a virgin) even in his fifties. He still trains daily according to the properly designated time of the day. That is midnight and 6 o'clock in the morning. He has the ability to cure without any physical presentation. He has successfully treated patient of the last stage of diabetes. He is a true Daoist, who does not live in a temple.

of the Golden Gate Dao Sect received his transmission in the Changbai Mountains in North East China.

According to the transmissions I received, an immortal will linger around human centers for 3 years after their rise to immortal life<sup>156</sup>. This means that they will continue to be part of human life in the form of observing our life and activities from their positions, which are invisible to us. At times, they will still materialize in human form to help us when needed. This usually happens at night when everything is totally tranquil and the air is fresh. This is a necessary condition for them to appear visible to us in their energy form. After three years, they will make the total ascension to the other world, which is called "Ling Jie"<sup>157</sup>. This is the dimension with no distinction of space and time. At this time, the only way to see them is in this "Ling Jie." Not many people in history had seen the immortals this way but those few who did, received the "secrets of the heavens" and became immortals themselves.

Zhang Boduan (984-1082), the founder of the southern school of Daoism, did not have a proper lineage. He claimed to have met an immortal in the mountains and received the Dao this way. In reality, he stumbled into the "Ling Jie" and met Lao Zi, who showed him the way of cultivation. His written recordings of this teaching became "Chapters of the True Enlightenment". It is an important classic in the Daoist Cannons today. He did not dare to say that he met Lao Zi because at that time, it was common knowledge that Lao Zi was dead thousands of years ago. Because of these kinds of occurrences that are totally out of the ordinary and cannot be verified, many Daoist adepts refuse to divulge their lineage.

In the summer of 1997, my friend Liu He and I went to Nanning in south-western China (it borders Viet Nam) to

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<sup>156</sup> Will this departure to another world viewed as "death"? This is another question to ponder about.

<sup>157</sup> We normally think of this as the spiritual side of the reality. This could be the dimension that is totally Yin. For their pure Yang energies must live in the pure Yin energy field.

pay a visit to Master Li Ning<sup>158</sup>. Master Li Ning made a similar claim. He told me that his master lives in a cave in the “Ten Thousand Mountains” and had been there for 80 years. He did not know his master’s name, or age. He had by 1997 lived in the cave with his master for 18 years. They only drank the water on the mountain stream and ate wild fruits and herbs.

My good friend Liu Weiming<sup>159</sup> also has a similar story. He is amazing with his ability to treat people of various diseases. (This will be discussed in the Chapter on Healing). According to him, his master belongs to the “Golden Gate” sect of Daoism. He lives in the Changbai Mountain Range in North-eastern China.

When I was a junior high school student. I learned Bajiquan from a classmate in my hometown of Wulian, Shandong Province. I went to the site near a bridge at dawn every day. Every time, I arrived, I would hear all the stomping noises in the dark on the other side of the bridge. This went on for about two years. I had never been able to see the person’s faces, but just assumed they were my friend and his master. When I asked him later, he told me that his master only taught him before daylight. He didn’t know what the master looked like either. The master had come down from the mountain<sup>160</sup> to teach him every morning. This friend of mine, demonstrated the ability to grind a porcelain rice bowl into powder in his palms at the graduation ceremony!

These stories are far from conclusive. They point to one thing: that secrets are passed down in a secret way and unexplainable way. We don’t know why. Just that it is so.

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<sup>158</sup> This master is not the famed Chinese gymnast Li Ning.

<sup>159</sup> Another Qigong master in Shenyang, Liaoning, China.

<sup>160</sup> When I went back there for a visit with my students Yaron Seidman and Thomas Yeung in the winter of 2002, I realized that the mountain was more like a giant hill. In my childhood memory, thought it always appeared to be a mountain.

## AGE OF SOME OF THE IMPORTANT IMMORTALS

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I am listing the life span of some of the known immortals for reference only. Of course, according to the believers of the idea of immortality in Daoism, the immortals DON'T REALLY DIE. They only transmogrify their human bodies into other life forms that continue to live in the Upper Palaces<sup>161</sup>. The Chinese word for this transmogrification is "Shi Jie", which means "the separation of the body"<sup>162</sup>. There are many stories of this transmogrification. Some appear to be credible while others are not. The most common way the transmogrification story is told is through a two-fold process like this:

- ❖ The immortal would predict the date of his/her death. He would then tell his/her disciples to prepare for it.
- ❖ The deceased body would have one of the following characteristics:
  - A) The body would stay soft and colorful for up to 7 days or more.
  - B) There would be a special fragrant aroma from the body.

In some cases, the absence of the body was viewed as proof for transmogrification. In this case, the Daoist symbol of white crane would be employed to suggest that the person has risen to the Upper Palace. The founder of the "Wu Duo Mi Dao" (The Five Bushels of Rice Sect) Zhang Ling jumped from the mountaintop<sup>163</sup> to reach for a book on a tree on the cliff. He went straight down without getting to the tree. The next day, his disciples declared that they did not find his body at the bottom of the mountain. While searching

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<sup>161</sup> This is somewhat like the idea of living in heaven.

<sup>162</sup> That is the direct translation of the word. Of course in normal English, it would mean "the separation of the body from the spirit or soul."

<sup>163</sup> This mountain has since been named the "He Ming Shan", the Crane Crying Mountain. It is located in today's Sichuan Province in China.

for him with a large search party (many witnesses this way), they all witnessed a crane fly into the sky from the mountaintop. This was accepted by all disciples and people present as fact that he had gone to the Upper Palace to join the ranks of immortals.

The story of immortal Chen Tuan (see chapter on him in this book) also has a similar ring to it.

Now time for real human lives. The Seven Northern Immortals all lived a fairly short life:

- ❖ Wang Chongyang, 59;
- ❖ Liu Chuxuan, 57;
- ❖ Ma Danyang, 61;
- ❖ Tan Chuduan, 63;
- ❖ Sun Buer, 64;
- ❖ Hao Datong, 73;
- ❖ Wang Chuyi, 75; and
- ❖ Qiu Chuji, 80.

Does this mean that the Northern Sect will not promote longevity? The answer is no. These seven immortals lived at a time of war and famine. The average life span during that time was very short, under 40. At least we know that by comparison they did not live a short life. Another reason is that the All Truth Sect was not concerned with longevity at all. Their pursuit was wholly based on becoming one with the Dao. When that is achieved, their mission is accomplished. The only reason that an All Truth Immortal would prolong his life was to live until he found a suitable disciple.

The other immortals of succeeding generations of this sect also showed that they were indeed capable of reaching advanced ages.

- ❖ Chen Tuan 118,

- ❖ Zhang Wumeng 99,
- ❖ Lan Yuandao 172,
- ❖ Zhang Boduan 96,
- ❖ Shitai 136,
- ❖ Yin Zhiping 83,
- ❖ Zhang Zhichuan 120,
- ❖ Xia Zhicheng 83,
- ❖ Zhang Zhisu 81,
- ❖ Wang Changyue 159,
- ❖ Liu Yiming 88, and
- ❖ Liu Mingrui 93<sup>164</sup>.

The author of "Qian Jin Yao Fang" Sun Simiao (581-682) lived 101 years.

Bagua Xinggong master Li Qingrui<sup>165</sup> lived 256 years. He was born in Yunnan province. At the age of 90, he moved to Sichuan province and started a new career as a doctor.

According to my personal knowledge, Master Li Cangshan was 110 in 1993. He practiced a Yangsheng (longevity) Qigong system called "Bu Lao Hui Chun Gong" (No Aging Return to Youth Gong). I do not have information as to whether he is still alive today.

As I mentioned in this book elsewhere, Qigong and Taiji are not the same. I also have suggested that they are closely related, especially in matters of health and longevity. Here I made a list of the long span of some know Taijiquan masters for reference and for comparison.

Hong Junsheng

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<sup>164</sup> Sources for the above are from various journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries and Daoist glossaries that I have made notes of in the past.

<sup>165</sup> According to Rong Liang. No specific information was given as to Li Qingrui's birth and death dates.



Chen Changxing	83
Chen Xin	81
Yang Luchan	79
Yang Jianhou	79
Chen Qingping	74
Wu Jianquan	73
Chen Zhongxing	73
Sun Lutang	72
Hao Weizhen	72
Chen Fake	71
Yang Shaohou	69
Wu Ruxiang	69
Quan You	69
Xu Rusheng	67
Li Yiyu	60
Chen Jixing	57
Yang Banhou	56
Yang Chengfu	54

A look at the life span of the known Qigong and Taijiquan masters show that they don't really have longer lives expectancy as we originally thought. It appears that the idea that Qigong and Taijiquan promote longevity, if not immortality, has no support from these listed facts. Many westerners and Chinese alike have asked this simple question: If they didn't live a longer and healthier life, why are we doing Qigong and Taiji?

As a matter of fact, today, many people in the world, especially countries like Japan, Canada and China live very long lives (over 90 years of age). How can we explain this?

### **Reasons for short life:**

- ❖ They did not know the difference between nurturing and training. Young people should train 70% and nurture 30% and the opposite for older people. GRANDMASTER Feng Zhiqiang has exclusive theories on this point. In their eagerness to achieve physical power over night,

many promising young people have totally destroyed their physical wellbeing. This is also true with internal martial arts. In Chen Style Taijiquan, many practitioners are known to have destroyed their knees, heel and many other important body parts. Even today, the Chen Style Taijiquan division of any competition will be filled with competition of muscle power and the loudness of the competitor's stomping feet.

- ❖ This problem was many folds worse in ancient times. The competition was fierce. It was a matter of life and death. This forced those who used martial arts as a profession to train in ways that were detrimental to their health. Many pure Daoists who did not practice martial arts also had to train in their meditation in a harsh way in order to produce verifiable result to impress others.
- ❖ Not good at health aspect. Only stress martial arts. Yang Chengfu was 290 lb. He was obviously over weight for his medium physical body frame. Chen Zhaokui was overweight. For others, it was a vicious cycle of over eating, drinking, drugs, loss of sleep, no pattern in life, and control by external factors such as fame, and reputation.
- ❖ Poor medical facilities. Many easily treatable diseases were considered terminal in ancient times. There was also a culture of non-treatment for many diseases.
- ❖ Proper Qigong training would have corrected many of the health problems but most ancients, including the famed ones, were too occupied with a single-minded pursuit of their choice to follow the proper Daoist ways of life. This is surprising but true for Daoists.

# RESEARCH ON QIGONG

Yaron Seidman<sup>166</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Qigong is a common exercise in China. Its origin dates to the earliest times in ancient China. In modern days, it has gained enormous popularity beyond China's borders. Its unique movements are gracefully displayed when a practitioner engages in its practice. Yet the understanding of Qigong in the West, as well as, in modern China, is gradually diminishing. How should a person practice Qigong? How should one understand it? These questions remain to be explored.

Qigong is a reflection of traditional Chinese culture, which in its evolution took a very different path than Western culture. Prior to the Tang dynasty (sixth to ninth century AD) there was very little cultural exchange with the Western world. The development of Chinese traditional concepts took place during this early period. The ancient Chinese philosophers, as their counterparts in the West, were researching the wonders of the universe. For example, in today's world, we believe in the equality of all human beings, and we also commonly agree that each person is an individual and thinks for himself. This is an example of a dialectic opinion that the Chinese philosophers established as a core for all their theories. Though encountering the same or similar phenomena as the Western philosophers did, Chinese philosophers of ancient times developed their approach in a very different and pragmatic way.

Today after many centuries of Western civilization, our tools of judging the practice of Qigong are very limited.

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<sup>166</sup> Yaron Seidman is a disciple of Chen Zhonghua. This article is specially written for this book. This article is copyrighted by Mr. Yaron Seidman and the USA Hunyuantaiji Academy. Permission is given by Mr. Seidman in written form for the use of this article in this book.

The instruments, which allow us to grasp the essence of Qigong, exist in each and every one of us. It is our goal to find the right instruments and learn how to use them. To find out about the instruments inside us, we must first understand the instruments outside of us.

## **UNDERSTANDING QI AND QIGONG**

Qigong is the exercise of Qi. First, let us understand what Qi is. Qi is a widely used word in Chinese language and literature. Its meanings are numerous and its applications vast. Some translations into English call it "Energy" others call it "Life-Force". At this point, we should depart from our conventional thinking to make the necessary quantum leap into an understanding of Qi.

How can we understand Qi? Let us just for the time being depart from all physical forms and shapes. This is the first step for the understanding of Qi. Qi is a description of functions. A function is a place where there is no form. In a Western view, a place with no form is a void, and does not exist. In Chinese view, the universe consists of the material and physical, as well as functions and changes. Qi is energy in the sense of being the functions, or the moving force behind the physical. Yet the function and the physical are inseparable and are being separated here for simplification purposes. Having realized that, we can advance further to understand that Qi is in everything and is for itself everything.

The famous Daoist philosopher "Zhuang Zi" described Qi, "When it condenses life forms, and when it disperses death occurs". This statement is easily understood, yet at the same time much misunderstood. To a Western reader, it makes perfect sense to accept the Qi as life force. In which case, when the life force comes together there is life, and when it disperses there is death. However, Zhuang Zi in this statement merely states the vastness of Qi, and more importantly he defines what Qi actually is. Qi has a basic function; it expands and contracts. When the Qi contracts, all forms take shape and when Qi disperses all forms break apart and transform to non-form. Zhuang Zi chose the term

life and death to simplify this matter and make it easily readable. Life and death are the transformation of form and non-form.

If we look at the "life cycle" in a scientific way, we can see that at the time of conception, the male semen and the female egg come together to create a new life. The fetus is created from a group of functions (sexual activity) and forms (egg and semen). The semen and the egg are created in turn from a group of functions and forms in the human body. At the end of life, death occurs. This is the dispersion of function and form.

When we talk about Qi and what it represents, we mean the whole cycle of concentrating together to shape a form and the dispersion outward to "create" a non-form. The reason we use "create" in this context for "non-form" is that in the English language the idea of "non-form" is practically non-existent. In this simple example, the reader might get an insight into the differences between Chinese and Western concepts. In the Chinese language, it is easy to describe how "Qi disperses to death." In the English language, it must be described as "Qi disperses to create or cause death".

### **YIN, YANG, TAIJI AND QI**

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the inner organs are a combination of the physical organs and a group of functions. It is very often that a Chinese Medicine practitioner will observe a disease of a particular organ, yet when this organ is physically being examined, it appears healthy. This is because the group of functions of a particular organ is inseparable from its physical organ. In a Western view, a physical organ is performing its functions. When the organ is healthy, the functions must be in order. There is a separation between the physical and the functional (energy). In Chinese philosophy there is a unification to create one single unit. This unit was named in ancient Chinese history, "Taiji". The physical organ and its functions are inseparable, the very same way the semen and the egg are completely inseparable from the function of sexual activity and the

creation of life. The Qi movements of contraction and expansion are the preliminary guidelines for the correct practice of Qigong.

Looking deeper into the movements of Qi, we get to the theory of Yin and Yang. The theory of Yin and Yang has gained a great popularity in the West recently. The proficient student should take great consideration when exploring this theory on all its aspects. At this point, we will only explain the Yin and Yang theory in relation to Qi movements.

Yin and Yang is a description of a dual force acting as a single unit. This means that there are two different forces inside one single shape or form. There is not one thing in our universe, which is constructed of one single quality. Yin and Yang are two sides of the same coin. These are not two separate forces acting towards each other, as we would normally think, rather they are two aspects of one single force.

Qi, in this context, is this one force that entails two non-matching aspects. The Yin and the Yang work with each other as well as against each other. They balance each other as well as unbalance each other. They are the two aspects of form and non-form, stillness and movement, life and death. When it comes to the Qi movement of expansion and contraction, the Yin and the Yang are the two aspects of the movement. In "form," the Yang is outside and the Yin is inside. In movement, from inside outward is a Yang motion, and from outside inwards is a Yin motion. In this relationship, understanding the transformation of power is crucial for understanding Qigong practice.

Let's assume that the Qi is in a ball shape. When the Qi is contracted, it has already moved toward the center of the ball and it is Yin in "Form", yet the movement inward is an accumulation of Yang force, thus it is Yang in "Function". It is like pressing on a spring, the more we press on it the smaller it becomes, yet at the same time, the power stored in the spring is becoming greater. When the Qi is expanded, it has moved outward to the exterior and is in Yang "Form". The movement outward is, at the same time, accumulation of Yin force, thus it is Yin in "Function". It is like stretching of

the spring, the more we stretch it, the bigger it becomes, and at the same time the more it pulls back inwards.

Also, when considering the influence of Yin and Yang on Qi movements, we must keep in mind that the increase of one means the decline of the other. When the Qi expands, the "Form" is increasing Yang and decreasing Yin, the "Function" is increasing Yin and decreasing Yang. When the Qi contracts, the "Form" is increasing Yin and decreasing Yang, the "Function" is increasing Yang and decreasing Yin. The increase and decrease of Yin and Yang happens simultaneously in a continuous cycle. The shaping of a form and function and the dispersion of a form and function follow each other without a break. Thus the cycle of life is unbroken. When the contraction and dispersion do not follow smoothly, we call it "Broken Taiji". This does not mean death, since death is part of the cycle of contraction and dispersion. It does mean that the movement of Qi is lost.

### **QI IN THE BODY**

To understand the movement of Qi in the body, it is essential to gain insight into the "Meridian Theory". This theory goes back to the "Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor" dated circa 800-300 B.C. It is out of the scope of this book to discuss in details the vast theory of the "Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor", yet it is of utmost importance for us to try to gain some insight into what the "Meridian Theory" really implies. In the West, it is widely accepted that the concept "Meridians" refer to a web of energy channels. In this channel web, human energy, or Qi, is circulated. This understanding of the "Meridians" is very partial and rather misrepresents the true meaning of this theory.

For a Western person, it is important to understand a theory in a very clear and rational way. The Western philosophy based itself on human rationale or the negation of a rationale. For example, a square piece of wood could only be square. It could not be square and round at the same time. Following this same line of reasoning when discussing "Meridian Theory," it must be in a channel form. A channel is

an obvious way to transport material or energy according to Western concept.

In previous discussion, however, we have already learned enough about the movements of Qi to know, that Qi is expanding and contracting. Qi movement is not the movement of materialistic energy. Materialistic energy is an energy that retains its consistency while being shifted from one position to another position. A good example of materialistic energy is electricity. Electricity is being transported via electric wires and maintains its volume. Even though there is a transformation of neutrons and protons, the expansion is being restricted to allow forward movement. In the case of Qi, there is no forward movement. There is only an expansion and contraction movement.

In the "Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor" it is said, "The Qi moves in and out as well as up and down". This description refers to the movement of contraction and expansion in the human body, as well as the contraction and expansion of the universe between heaven and earth. The Qi movement of "In and Out" is the contraction of Qi to the center of the body, or the Dantian area (in the lower abdomen). It is also the expansion of the Qi to the four limbs and the bones, flesh and skin. The Qi movement of "Up and Down" is the contraction of the Qi to the center of the earth (gravity, rain etc.). The expansion of Qi is the movement outwards towards the heaven and the stars (steam, gas, wind etc.). We can see that there is not a movement along a channel. Qi is not a materialistic energy. As we understand more and more what Qi actually is, we realize that the movement of Qi is not along channels as in electric wires. It is yet of fundamental importance to understand what the "Meridians" are, to be able to correctly perform Qigong exercises.

## **QI AND MERIDIANS**

The "Meridians" are first mentioned in the "Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor" as the "Six Meridians". The "Six Meridians" theory was the first documented attempt by Chinese scholars to analyze the transformation of Qi. While



the theory of Yin and Yang preceded the "Six Meridians", it was only a philosophical thesis that could very minimally help the scholars in their search for health and longevity. The "Six Meridians" was the first fragmentation of Yin and Yang. The importance of the "Six Meridians" is also measured by the work of the great Chinese physician Zhang Zhongjing "Cold-Induced and Miscellaneous Diseases" (circa 250 B.C.). Zhang Zhongjing's entire work was the analysis of the "Yellow Emperor's" chapter of the "Six Meridians". The "Meridian Theory" was introduced and developed in a later stage in history. It was mainly developed to assist with the Zing-Fu (Internal Organ Theory). Later, we will discuss the "Six Meridians" theory, but first let us explore the discussions about the "Meridians" in the "Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor". Following is a complete translation of Chapter 57 "Treatise of Jing and Luo (Meridians)".

The Yellow Emperor asked: "When observing the meridians there are five different colors; green, yellow, red, white and black. What is the reason behind it?" Qi Bo (the heavenly teacher) responded: "The Jing (Form) is normal and has color and the Luo (Function) is abnormal and has transformation." The emperor asked: "When Jing (Form) is normal how is the color?" Qi Bo replied: "Heart is red, lungs are white, liver is green, spleen is yellow and kidneys are black. It is all true to the colors of its Jing Mai (Form)." The emperor asked: "Yin and Yang of Luo (Function) is it true to its Jing (Form)?" Qi Bo replied: "The color of the Yin part of Luo (Function) is true to its Jing (Form). The color of the Yang part of Luo (Function) is transforming and has no regularity. It follows the four seasons and transforms. The cold causes congealing, and congealing causes the color of green and black. The heat causes dampness, and dampness causes the color of yellow and red. This all is normal color and represents a healthy state. The five colors are all visible, so it is called 'Hot and Cold'". The emperor said: "Supreme".

As we can see in the above quotation, some of the real meanings of the "Meridians" are being explained. Today, the translation from Chinese of "Jing Luo" is Meridians, and it

means big channels (Jing) and small channels or Collaterals (Luo). This translation and interpretation of the concept "Jing Luo" does not do justice to the true meaning of the idea behind it. The Yellow Emperor relays his questions about an energetic transformation in the human body, and not about a set of physical channels. The organs are assembled as a group of functions and correspond to this energetic transformation.

The main focus of the above discussion is about the energetic relationship between the organs and the universe. The instruments for judging this relationship are the five colors; red, white, green, yellow and black. These five colors in turn are the reflection of the "Five Elements (Wu Xing)" Theory, which is the basis for all transformation of matter in the physical world. The Five Elements represent the five Yin organs; Heart, Lungs, Liver, Spleen and Kidneys as well as the five directions in the universe; South, West, East, Center and North, respectively. We should look carefully into this chapter of the "Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor." Try to forget about the many generations of interpretations and seek the original meanings. This will bring us one step closer to the understanding of Qi and its movement.

### **MODERN INFLUENCE ON ANCIENT CONCEPTS**

Departing at this point from a specific discussion about classical texts, it is important to further understand the influence of time over society, culture and language on the original concepts developed anciently. In the past one hundred years, the traditional classical texts have been widely misinterpreted. A profound influence from the West was introduced into China, and was widely accepted by Chinese folk. Furthermore, the government has adopted a policy of "Coming out with secrets". Where all, previously secretly transmitted teachings, were to become public. The great knowledge of the past was to become available to all and not individually owned. Along with this policy's many positive achievements came also defeats. One great loss was the impossible transmission of very deep knowledge. Traditionally a practitioner of Chinese medicine, Qigong,

laijiquan or other ancient arts had very little access to literature. The main goal of studying was to reach an accomplishment, within a lifetime, as a follower of one's master. In that way, study was slow but profound. To become a medical doctor in one's family required approximately twenty to thirty years of study. Within this long period of apprenticeship, a person could have gained a thorough understanding of the classical texts and their true meanings, even without reading them on a regular basis.

The "Yellow Emperor" classics were compiled over a period of five hundred years. These classics are the collection works by many generations of devoted practitioners. Their realizations of the different theories came from a life long contemplation. These life long achievements appear over and over again throughout Chinese history. In today's environment, a short way to success is sought after exclusively. The rewards for practicing a certain art are for the bigger part financial. A lifetime achievement is not a common cause for the majority.

The familiar concept for the "Meridian Theory", a web of channels that leads energy, has yet to be looked into carefully. The above chapter 57 is widely translated and interpreted as a discussion about the main channels "Jing" and the collaterals "Luo", where they represent physical channels under the surface of the skin. To the modern Chinese and Western student, it is the only reasonable way to understand such a text. The philosophical concepts turn into physical projections, which are perceived clearly by ordinary brain activity and familiar patterns of thinking.

For us to understand Qi and Qigong, we must adapt to a new environment. The new environment is such that our minds should be open to the things that are not necessarily understood at first sight that ordinary brain activity and mundane thinking patterns cannot grasp immediately. These things might become available to us with time as long as we continue our practice. For Qigong practice, this is the most fundamental underlying cause for great accomplishments.

## **LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE ON UNDERSTANDING ANCIENT CONCEPTS**

In the long development of the Chinese culture, one noticeable change is the use of language. The Chinese language contains today a wide variety of dialects, of which some are completely different from others. Over the centuries, the usage of words has gone through a metamorphosis as well. Originally, a Chinese character represented a phenomenon. Its meaning might have been the sun movement or the flow of a river, a change of the season or the mighty mountains. As the centuries went by, the vocabulary increased, and the need for more characters increased as well. The meaning of characters had to be modified, and partially take a role of letters, as we know them in other languages. Today, most characters are composed of a "Radical" and a phonetic part. The radical gives the word its meaning, while the phonetic part its sound. In ancient China, the usage of characters was to the large extent the meaning of a certain character, a pictograph comprised of several strokes. There was little or no relevancy to the pronunciation, which thus was not inserted into the character. That is why it is, today, of great difficulty to understand classical texts such as "The Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor" and "The Book Of Changes" both dating back some two thousand five hundred years.

One example of a misunderstood character is the character "Mai". "Mai" translates today to blood vessel in English, yet its original meanings differ widely from that. Today, the character for "Mai" entails two parts. The first is the radical for flesh, while the second part is the character "Eternity". The character "Eternity" is for the last several hundred years a mistake for a very similar character, "Flowing". The characters "Flesh" and "Flowing" represent the flow of blood in the body.

At this point, our search into "Mai" has only begun. The original character for "Mai"(two thousand years ago) was composed of two parts. The first part was the character "Moon" and the second character was "Pu". "Pu" is an ancient

character that means the flowing movement of the River "Ye." The River "Ye" was an ancient Chinese river, located in "Shi" county in the state of "Yue" (an ancient state from the pre-Christian era).

It is at this stage that we get to a crossroads. We can contemplate on a possible meaning of the character "Mai", or accept the modern meaning of "Blood Vessel". A broader meaning for the character "Mai" is the low and high tides of the River "Ye" and its relationship with the moon. The ancient Chinese have noticed a clear relationship between the moon and the tide of the River "Ye."

It is possible that both interpretations are right. Yet understanding the broader meaning of the word "Mai" could shed more light on the mysterious classical texts. In "The Internal Classics of the Yellow Emperor" the usage of the character "Mai" is repeated over and over again. Normally mentioned in closings about the "Six Meridians." Many times the character "Mai" is mentioned in conjunction with a particular organ as "Liver Mai, Lung Mai" etc. which over the centuries was mistaken for the Liver Meridian and the Lung Meridian as channels within the "Six Meridians". The right interpretation should have been an energetic transformation of the liver and the lungs within the "Six Meridians". The very same way the low and high tides of the River "Ye" interacted with the moon.

## **QI IN THE CYCLE OF THE SIX MERIDIANS**

The "Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor" does speak about the "Meridians" as it calls them the "Six Meridians". The "Six Meridians" are; Supreme Yang (Tai Yang), Lesser Yang (Shao Yang), Bright Yang (Yang Ming), Supreme Yin (Tai Yin), Lesser Yin (Shao Yin) and Extinct Yin (Jue Yin). These are the six phases of transformation from Yang into Yin and from Yin into Yang. Next, we will explore the regularity of the "Six Meridians" and how it affects the Qi.

The "Internal Classics of the Yellow Emperor" brings forth for the first time in history the doctrine of the "Six Meridians". This doctrine aims at bringing its practitioners a

step closer to understanding the Yin and Yang, their action, reaction and interaction. In chapter 29 "Treatise on Supreme Yin and Bright Yang" it opens: The Yellow Emperor asked, "Supreme Yin and Bright Yang are the Exterior and the Interior, the manifestation (Mai) of Spleen and Stomach. How is their disharmony to take shape?" As in all Chinese classical texts the opening statement is the main focus for the following chapter. In this chapter the Yellow Emperor explains that Supreme Yin and Bright Yang are internally exteriorly related. They are the manifestation of the Spleen and Stomach. The description of the "Six Meridians" begins here. It is not in accord with the modern-day understanding of the "Six Meridians".

In the past several hundred years the concept of physical meridians grew stronger, and the division of the meridians was ordained, beginning with Supreme Yang and moving inward in a linear way, ending with Extinct Yin (as listed above). This already represents a materialistic view, which has departed a long way from its classical origins. The perspective on life became linear instead of the traditional circular view.

In the "Yellow Emperor," the meridians are described beginning with Supreme Yin and Bright Yang. These two phases of transformation represent the Earth, which is in the center of the universe. It is the beginning of creation, where the myriad things spring. Chapter 29 continues with: "Yang is the heaven's Qi and controls the exterior. Yin is the earth's Qi and controls the interior". This is the explanation to the two meridians Supreme Yin and Bright Yang. What they are and how they are related. The text goes further to explain how the exterior corresponds to the Yang organs and the interior to the Yin organs, their pathological development and remedies. At this point, the reader must depart from familiar theories, and let his own intuition develop his skill further.

The description of the "Six Meridians" as a complete doctrine is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this book. A short description is sufficient. In the modern-day view, the "Six Meridians" are six stages of progress in the transformation of Yin and Yang. On a linear (and simple

scale) the meridians begin with Supreme Yang. The Supreme Yang is the phase where the Yang energy is at its greatest manifestation. It is the hottest time of the year. Lesser Yang is where the Yang energy is reduced. It is not as hot as before. Bright Yang is a dim light of Yang where there is not much Yang energy on display. It is significantly less warm. Supreme Yin is the greatest manifestation of Yin. The temperature is cold. In Lesser Yin the Cold is declining. In the last phase Extinct Yin is on the verge of extinction. This is where apparently one cycle is accomplished. Transformation from Yang to Yin and Yin to Yang has passed. This transformation in reality is not correct and needs to be criticized. The original concept of energy cycle begins as follows.

Supreme Yin and its counterpart Bright Yang interact. The greatest Yin energy embraces within itself the smallest Yang energy. It is the center of the ball. The same way the earth is the center of our planet. At this point some additional explanations are needed to lead the way ahead. Even though the Yin energy is at its mightiest manifestation, it does not mean that it is in its biggest size (volume). The greatest Yin energy is in its smallest physical form. The greatest Yang energy is in its biggest physical form. The understanding of Yin and Yang should be differentiated between energy and form, physical and not physical.

The second phase of transformation is within Lesser Yin and Supreme Yang. The reduced Yin energy is being surrounded by the greatest Yang energy. It is the heaven that surrounds all the physical in our planet.

The third phase is Lesser Yang divides with Extinct Yin. This is the most difficult part to understand. This phase resembles a door hinge. The door hinge stays fixed in place, yet it is the most important thing for the door's swinging movement. The Lesser Yang and the Extinct Yin are the instruments leading to the exchange of Yin and Yang. Zhang Zhongjing in his work "Cold-Induced and Miscellaneous Diseases" stated: The opening time for Extinct Yin is the end of the storage (winter). The opening time for the Lesser Yang

is the beginning of birth (spring)". The total description of the "Six Meridians" revolving within the three phases, symbolizes a round spherical ball. The ball is three-dimensional and has a spiralling as well as contracting-expanding movements.

## **THE TWELVE MERIDIANS**

The twelve meridians, as we know them today, were originally described as the "Six Meridians" of the hands and the "Six Meridians" of the feet. Thus, multiply by two the six turned into twelve. Each one of these meridians needed representation, and so was assigned an internal organ. At earlier times, where the Chinese Traditional Arts were more energetic than physical, there were only five Yin organs and six Yang organs. The number five corresponded with the Earth and thus represented Yin, while the number six corresponded with the Heavens and so represented Yang.

In a much later period in Chinese history, the problem of twelve meridians and eleven organs was modified. The subject of the unmatched eleven and twelve developed into a problem, as the general concept of Energy transformed into a concept of physical. It became more and more intolerable as physicians were unable to match the physical image of energy channels, which connect to the inner organs. At the same time, there was one lonely channel that was considered, until then, part of the heart. This problem was transformed by an invention of the pericardium as an organ. The pericardium is the encasement around the heart. Thus, the ancient description of two channels connected to the heart could match perfectly.

Now, there were twelve physical meridians and twelve physical organs. Furthermore, there were six Yin meridians and six Yang meridians, as well as six Yin organs and six Yang organs. For a theory that was over the centuries gradually being rationalized, it was the right development. However, the issue that needs most to be discussed is; was that a progression or a regression?

Over five thousand years of history, the Chinese culture and traditional arts have developed immensely. Every



generation layered a layer of bricks until a magnificent structure was accomplished. The structure was so huge in dimensions that the generations who finished the upper layers had so very little knowledge of the foundations. The foundations of the Chinese arts are in the energetic world and not in the physical one. They all originated from the ancient cosmology and numerology. The conviction that the universe is Qi and Qi is the universe.

For the Western reader, it is seemingly easy to comprehend. However, this comprehension is not necessarily complete. It is through the long practice of Qigong that a true understanding can be reached. An example of the Western rational understanding of the Meridian Theory brought forward by one of the famous Chinese medicine practitioners in the West: "Acupuncture is applied to vital energy points located along the meridian system. It operates by influencing the currents of electromagnetic energies that flow through the channels. These altered energy currents then carry the therapeutic effects to the targeted internal organs and tissues, balancing and regulating their functions." This theory is correct by representing a rational view to the Traditional Chinese Medicine. However, it is a rationalized acceptance that our Western science is the truth, and of such truth, there is only one. It is a description of mechanical electromagnetic currents running through the body. It is a concept, which is readily understandable to all Western readers. If we believe that Western science and its great accomplishments are the sole truth, that there is nothing beyond what we know right now at this period of history. We will never break through to new heights. At the same time, the accomplishments achieved by the ancient sages of China are very difficult to understand. We can only contemplate on them, and there is no better way than Qigong practice.

As we search further into the Qi movements, our way reaches a dead end. We can analyze energetic concepts only with scientific tools. We can try to measure it, weigh it or contain it. Utilizing the scientific tools and the knowledge we possess can only bring us so far. Yet, we are puzzled by and

oblivious to the ancient sages and their findings. Concepts such as Dantian (Elixir Field), One grain of Hunyuan Qi etc. are completely evasive to our minds. Some even rationalize that these must be all religious beliefs to create order in their own minds. Nevertheless, researched for thousands of years by practitioners, whose lives were entirely dedicated to the study of Qi, the art of Qigong developed to a legacy.

## **NUMERIC EXPRESSIONS IN DESCRIBING QI**

The ancient sages in their quest for knowledge found less and less words to describe their findings. They gradually changed their method to a language of numbers. The numbers represented a system of logistics, which is beyond words. The sages have used numbers to explain nature, the changing of the seasons and constellations of stars in the night skies. It is not known where and how the Chinese numerology began, although a vast spectrum of theories about it exists. As we follow the footsteps of the ancient sages, we should not waste our energy in a historical debate. We should rather concentrate our goals on studying and developing further.

While we aim at an earlier starting point in history, we reach the "Internal Classics of The Yellow Emperor" (circa 800-300 B.C.). Chapter twenty "Treatise on three sections and nine parts" develops an astonishing pinnacle about numbers and the human life. The following is a quotation from it. " The Yellow Emperor opened and asked: 'I heard that the nine needles are plenty and grand with fathers and sons, while the numbers are not to be concurred. I heard one must seek the Dao, to be able to hand down to his sons and grand sons this secret of numbers. It constitutes in the bone marrow and stored in the Liver and Lungs. It was handed to us after sacrificial ceremonies, and is not to be wasted for nothing. It is the order to unite with heaven and earth. There is a beginning and end to all. Above, we must conform to the heaven's light, and the constellations. Below, we must conform to the four times (seasons) and the Five Elements? Deep and shallow intermingle, winter's Yin and summer's Yang, how should the human conform to all that? Oh I heard

it is a gracious Dao'. Qi Bo answered: 'Wisdom is all in your words! This is the numerology of heaven and earth'".

The previous section gave a general expression of the importance of numbers to the human being. The following section gives a more detailed perspective of what the numbers are. This description of the numbers is a milestone for every Qigong practitioner, on his path of accomplishment. "The Yellow Emperor asked: 'I have heard that the numbers of heaven and earth unite with the man and with the form. The blood and Qi flow smoothly and differentiate life from death. How is that so?' Qi Bo answered: 'the numerology of heaven and earth begins with the number one and ends with the number nine. One is heaven and two is earth, while three is man. Because it is all divided in three, three multiply with three is nine, and it conforms to the nine of eternity. It is said that the man has three sections, and each section has three parts. This is how it is differentiated between life and death. It is the residence for the numerous diseases as well as dispelling them all if one can harmonize empty and full within them.'"

It is here that a foundation for a profound Qigong practice is led. This gives us an original description of the three Dantians, the upper, middle and lower Dantians. The text goes on to explain what each section is composed of: "The Emperor asked: 'what are the three sections then?' Qi Bo answered: 'there are a lower, middle and upper sections. Each section has three parts. The three parts contains a heaven part, an earth part and a man part. This is for our guidance, and it is for the truth'".

As we read through this text, it should serve us for a contemplation object. While we practice the three Dantians in exercises such as "Collect the Qi to the Three Dantians" and "Opening and Closing of the Three Dantians", it is only natural that we will reach a deeper understanding of the above texts. It will serve us in life to prevent illnesses from arising as well as prolong our life span. It is the aim of every practitioner to get familiar with his three Dantians, nourish and treasure them. As grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang stated: "I will not sell my Dantians for a thousand ounces of gold". .

## **CONCLUSION**

We have demonstrated to the reader the possibility that ancient fundamental concepts such as Qi, Meridians, and even Yin and Yang, as perceived today, might have lost much of their original meaning over the centuries. We also explained why external instruments are inappropriate in helping us understand Qi and the practice of Qigong. With today's conventional thinking, without some rationale, it is difficult to advance in the practice of the ancient art of Qigong. Yet, as stated earlier, the instruments, which allow us to grasp the essence of Qigong, exist in each and every one of us.

The goal of this discussion was to discover how to find the right instruments and to learn how to use them. We, as practitioners, must empty our minds from accumulated knowledge, and contemplate on the Qi in our body and the universe. It is the practice of Qigong itself that guides us to a greater understanding of Qi, opens the meaning of ancient texts and helps us discover new things about our part in the universe and ourselves. This is the path laid before us by sages and practitioners of the ages past.

# QIGONG DICTIONARY



Originally I titled this chapter Glossary. The reality is, it is more than a glossary. It is a mini encyclopaedia of Qigong and Taiji terminology and beyond. I have used this section to include anecdotal stories, glossary, Qigong terminology, Taiji terminology, people, and practice methods and theories. It is my hope that the information provided here, though incomplete and incomprehensive, will serve to give more background to the culture and life of the people who have been engaged in the art of Qigong for the last few thousand years. It is imperative for westerners to have such a background in their pursuit of this discipline. Some of the information listed in this section might be repetitive from previous sections but it is necessary to have a complete list of all information used in this book for easy referencing by the readers.

## 12 Harms:

The 12 causes of harms to a Qigong practitioner. They are:

- a) stare too long will harm the blood
- b) lying too long will harm the Qi
- c) standing too long will harm the bones
- d) walk too long will harm the ligaments
- e) sit too long will harm the flesh
- f) too much physical exercise will harm the body
- g) too much worry will harm the body
- h) too much happiness will harm the body
- i) too accommodating to others will harm the body
- j) too much attention to details will harm to body
- k) too much cold and too much heat will harm the body
- l) the wrong mixture of yin yang will harm the body

## 12 Restraints

12 key restraints for all Qigong practitioners: thought, contemplation, worry, desire, activity, words, laughter, pleasure, happiness, anger, obsession, and abominable behaviour.

## Active Child Time (Huo Zi Shi)

During the day, the hours of 11:00 pm to 1:00 am is considered the "Active Child Time", which is the time of the end of yin energy and the beginning of the yang energy. This is also considered the best time for Hunyuan Qigong practice.

In the human body, the time that an erection of the penis is about to occur is considered the "Active Child Time".

## All Truth School of Daoism

Quanzhen Dao. It was established in Muping, Shandong Province by Wang Chongyang in 1167. All Truth refers to the state when one understands the heart and sees the true nature of the human character. This sect belongs to the Northern Sect, which focuses on the mind rather than the physical exercises. There has been a historical contention that the Xing (mind) school produced masters who lived short lives. Of course this contention is erroneous, as a look into the history of this sect will show that many of the later proponents of this sect lived very long lives.

## Amulet (Hu Fu)

Amulet and talismans are referred to in the oldest Chinese texts. All sorts of materials were used to fashion them; in later times, however, they were made principally from paper, on which a message to the evil spirits was written, advising them not to harm the bearer of the amulet. Since this message was addressed not to men but to spirits, it was written in "ghost script", a form of writing whose characters bear a certain similarity to ordinary Chinese characters, but which is fully accessible only to Daoist adepts. Some

Daoists claim that a handwritten amulet warding off fire can be understood by the spirits in the Western world as well, as one and the same 'ghost script' is uniformly used and understood all over the world.

An

Number 4 of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. It refers to a force obtained by pushing and pressing with the palms. Normally it is a downward force. It is the central energy Peng applied downwards.

Authentic Man (Zhenren)

Refers to those Daoist Qigong masters who had come to terms with the Dao and could live a long time. Similar to the term immortal.

Avoidance of Grains (Bigu)

One of the Daoist Qigong training methods. The practitioner will totally give up the intake of any grains or food. He will only drink water and get nutrition from breathing air. Some schools of Qigong still advocate this method. It is not used in the Hunyuan Qigong system.

Bai hui

Acupuncture. point on the crown of the head

Belt Meridian (Dai Mai)

One of the eight main meridians. It is like the belt that covers the entire waist area of a person. It controls all the vertical meridians in the body. In the Hunyuan Qigong system, there is a special exercise called the "Belting Meridian Grinding".

Big Wild Goose Gong

Belongs to the Kunlun Mountain Branch of Qigong. Its creator was Dao An. This form of Qigong was revived in 1983 and became very popular in recent years.

Bu Fa

Stepping exercises or footwork.

## Cai

Number 5 of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. It refers to a force exerted by a quick grab and pull. Normally the force is applied to the opponent's wrist but extended to the foot. It is the central energy of peng applied backwards and down.

## Cannon Fist (Pao Chui)

The second routine of the Chen Style Taijiquan syllabus. The first is simply called Yi Lu, or first set. According to the Chen Family there were originally 7 routines in the bare-hand system. Today there are only the first two that are still practiced. In recent years, there have been many claims of the third set. Most have proven to be hoaxes.

## Cao Guojiu

He was one of the Eight Immortals. He was the brother of one of the empresses of the Song Dynasty. His exact name is not known. He is known as the "Guojiu" because of the family relationship with the emperor. "Guo" means country. "Jiu" means uncle on the side of the mother. Therefore he is called the "Uncle of the Country" because the empress was his sister. He was interested in the pursuit of the Dao so he gave up everything and went into the mountains, where he met Zhong Lique and Lu Dongbin. Zhongli asked him what he was nurturing. He answered, "the Dao!" Where is the Dao?" Lu Dongbin asked him. "In the heavens. " he answered. "Where are the heavens?" He answered, "In my heart!" After passing this test, Zhongli and Lu Dongbin inducted him into the ranks of immortals.

## Chan Si gong (Silk Reeling)

It is also spelled as "Chan Si Gung". Reeling Silk Skill. Silk reeling exercises are a central part of Chen Style Xinyi Hunyuan Taijiquan. They are practiced as foundation for the development of proper Taiji skills that involve the 13 postures.



## Chen Fake

1887-1957. He was a 17th Generation Grand Master of Chen Family Taijiquan. Accredited for teaching the Chen Style Taijiquan to those outside of the Chen Village in 1928 when he moved to Beijing to teach. He was the president of the Beijing Martial Arts Society. Known as "Taiji, the One and Only" in the martial art world in Beijing during his time. Undefeated during his teaching career in Beijing. Major disciples are: Hong Junsheng, Gu Liuxin, Yang Xiaolou, Xu Rusheng, Chen Zhaokui (son), Lei Muni, Tian Xiuchen, and Feng Zhiqiang.

## Chen Family Taijiquan

Refers to the Taijiquan practiced within the Chen Family members of Chenjiagou, Wen County, Henan Province, China. Practitioners from the Chen Village who learned directly from one of the Chen Family masters can use this term to describe their style.

People outside of the family who directly learned this style from Chen Family members can only use the term "Chen Style Taijiquan".

## Chen Style Taijiquan

Original style of Taijiquan based on creations by Chen Wangting and further developed by following generations of the Chen Family in Chen Jiagou Village, Wenxian County, Henan Province, China. It was spread to the outside world by Chen Fake in 1928 when he moved to Beijing that year. Current proponents of this style are Feng Zhiqiang of Beijing, 18th generation grand master, and many 19th, and 20th generation masters of this art.

## Chen Tuan (~871-989)

Daoist during the time of the Five Dynasties. He was also known as Chen Tunan. His Daoist name was Fu Yaozi. Emperor Zhou Shizong called him to the royal court and entitled him Mr. White Cloud. Again he was called to the royal court by Song Dynasty Emperor

Song Taizong and given the title of "Rare of the Rare". He practiced Qigong in the Wudang Mountains. For over 20 years, he only drank a cup of wine each day. Later he moved to Hua Mountain and befriended immortals like Lu Dongbin and Liu Haizhan. He authored the books "Early Heaven Chart" and "Wuji Chart". The general categorization of the Qigong training process into the 3 stages of 1) Train the Essence into Qi; 2) Train the Qi into Spirit and 3) train the Spirit into Emptiness, originated in his writings. His theories on "Changes" and the "Early Heaven Chart" came from a legendary Daoist called "the Daoist in the Hemp Garment" (Ma Yi Dao Zhe).

Chen Xiyi

Another names for Chen Tuan.

Chi Songzi (Red Pine Nut)

Legendary immortal in Chinese history. It was said that he lived at the time of Shen Nong, who gave rise to agriculture in China. Chong Songzi had the ability to walk on fire and in water. There was also a record of a certain Mr. Zhang Liang wanting to study the art of avoidance of food, Tu Na and the ability to fly from Chi Songzi.

Chi

Same as Qi.

Chin Na

See Qin Na below in this glossary.

Confucianism

One of the three founding religions of China (the other two are Daoism and Buddhism). Confucius is regarded as the creator of this religion. According to Confucius, man should get away from the ideas of life and death. He should only concentrate on the relationship between people and the relationship between man and society. So that the human nature can be perfected according

to the rules of the society. This will bring a common heritage to men and they can live happily together.

#### Cooling Off (Tuihuo which means "Retreat Fire")

Too much use of fire will cause the scorching of the Inner Dan. So during the Inner Dan training one must pay close attention to the exact temperament of the Dan progress. If necessary, one has to retreat from aggressive use of fire. This is called "Cooling Off". This can only be done during the yin hours of the day. The use of breath is restricted to the yin numbers of 24 per cycle only.

#### Crane Flying Pile (He Xiang Zhuang)

One of the Qigong systems. Created by master Zhao Jinxiang in 1980.

#### Da Wu (The Great Dance)

Refers to the uncontrolled dance of a Qigong practitioner under self activated Qi state.

#### Dadan Zhizhi (Directly Pointing to the Great Dan)

A classic Daoist book by Qiu Chuji of Yuan dynasty.

#### Dan Leak (Zoudan)

This refers to a problem in Qigong training. Normally this refers to the act of nocturnal emission, leaking of Qi from anus, and having a runny nose at the time of practice.

#### Dantian

Refers to the general area in the lower abdomen, beneath the navel and about one-third of the way in the abdominal cavity. In most Qigong systems, Dantian exists in three places in the body: the Upper Dantian, the Middle Dantian and the Lower Dantian. The Upper Dantian is in the Zuqiao point, which is roughly in between the eyes. The Middle Dantian is in the Solar Plexus point, roughly the middle of the body. The Lower Dantian is in the area slightly below the navel.

In the Hunyuan Qigong Sytem of Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang, The Dantians are placed differently. There are five Dantians in the body: (1) the upper Dantian roughly on the forehead between the eyes; (2) the middle Dantian three inches below the navel which is also generally referred to as Dantian; (3) the lower Dantian inside Huiyi; (4) the front Dantian in the position of the middle Dantian but in the front part of the body and (5) the rear Dantian which is in the position of the middle Dantian on the back of the body in the area of the kidneys. Dantian is generally considered the place where vital energy Qi is cultivated and stored. It corresponds to the element of earth.

No matter what term is used, when the general term Dantian is used, it refers to the area below the navel.

The Dantians have different functions: 1) the upper Dantian keeps the Spirit; 2) the Middle Dantian Stores Qi; and 3) the Lower Dantian produces Essence (Sperm).

#### Dantien

Also known as Dantian.

#### Daoism

One of the three founding religions of China (the other two are Confucianism and Buddhism). Lao Zi is regarded as the creator of this religion. The purpose of this religion is for man to become immortals. The method used is to "embrace the nature," "focus on Qi to cause flexibility of the body," and "to conquer the body to cultivate the mind."

Daoism has been termed the religion of the people in China. It helped form the Chinese society, culture, traditions and even language over the last 2600 years. It is mostly based on dogmatic ideas. The other two are: Confucianism for the government and Buddhism for the afterlife.

### Daoist Cannons (Dao Zang)

Name of the official cannons in the Daoist library. At the beginning, this term was used to indicate any library of Daoist cannons in Daoist temples. Later on, the Imperial Court took an interest in Daoism and started funding the building of Daoist libraries and temples. As a result of such funding, the Emperor exerted enormous authority over the selection of cannons into the official Dao Zang. Started in Tang Dynasty, there have been officially accepted texts used as Daoist Cannons. The current Daoist Cannons are composed of 5485 volumes that were selected during the Ming Dynasty.

### Deer Cart (Lu Che)

Act of rushing through the second pass in the Small Heaven method. This refers to the Jiaji pass. The secret of going through this pass is to rush through quickly.

### Delusional Dan

State when the practitioner tries too hard at achieving the Internal Dan that he/she will feel an imaginary Qi feeling. This usually is caused by the lack of prolonged training, nervousness and too much desire to achieve. The training and attainment of Qi must follow the proper procedure and proper training methods including the right recipes. Without proper oral instructions from a master, one will only attain the delusional Dan.

<b>Direction</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Color</b>	<b>#</b>
East	Wood	Green	9
South	Fire	Red	3
West	Metal	White	7
North	Water	Black	5
Center	Soil	Yellow	1

Donggong (Moving Gong)

Also known as external Qigong. Taiji and martial arts belong to this type of Qigong.

Dragon and the Tiger Meet

Refers to the intercourse of heart and kidneys.

Dragon and Tiger

Refers to heart and kidneys.

Early Heaven Breathing

Also referred to as Embryo Breathing. In Hunyuan Qigong, this term refers to the state of physical stomach breathing that does not require the air coming in and out of the nose, as when the fetus was breathing in the mother's womb.

Early Heaven Qi

Also referred to as Original Qi. It is the one tiny bit of something that comes out of the nothingness of Wuji. It stays as though it is there, but it is not really there. This is the original Dao, from which everything comes. One cannot experience this unless he/she is totally into Wuji state.

Earthly Fortress

Mouth

Eight Keeps

They are: Harmony, Spirit, Qi, Benevolence, Simplicity, Change, Emotion and Fullness.

Eight Pieces of Brocade (Ba Duan Jin)

A set of Qigong exercises created during the Southern Song Dynasty. Revived in the 1980s.

Eight Senses (Ba Chu)

Movement, itchiness, lightness, heaviness, coolness, warmth, astringency, and slippery.

Eighteen Pagodas

Refers to the throat.

### Embryo Breathing (Tai Xi)

It is also called Navel Breathing. It is a method that imitates the breathing of the embryo in the mother's womb. When the breathing is regulated according to this method, the nose and mouth will stop functioning as part of the breathing mechanism. Instead, the navel will start pumping the air in and out of the lungs. Ge Hong in his "Embracing the Simplicity" called this kind of breathing the breathing of the Dao. In Hunyuan Qigong, this is the method used for breathing. This is why breathing is not stressed at the beginning of the Hunyuan Qigong training. Only by relaxing the body parts that are involved in breathing, will the navel start moving on its own. When one reaches this level, he will feel that breathing is not done in the body. It feels that someone else is controlling the breathing, as though there is hidden assistance from immortals that we cannot communicate with. Because of this mysterious nature, this method is not taught to many people.

### Er Lu

Second routine. Refers to the Cannon Fist form of the Chen Style Taijiquan.

### External Dan

The practice of trying to extract Dan from the mixing of mercury and lead.

### Fajin

Sometimes misspelled as fajing in North America.

Issue strength. Sudden and violent releases of power are a hallmark of Chen Style Taijiquan. The result of Fajin is shaking power.

### Feng Lu (Closing the Furnace)

A stage in Inner Dan training. Once the Dan is achieved, the practitioner must return all intent and Qi back to the Dantian and watch the Dan. He must watch it with his mind's eyes and his intent, in order to prevent it from getting lost. He must consciously do so

until he does not know the existence of this Dan in his Dantian any more. Only this way, the practice can be part of the natural Dao.

**Feng Zhiqiang:** An eighteenth generation grand master of Chen Style Taijiquan. He was a disciple of grand master Chen Fake of Chen Family Taijiquan and grand master Hu Yaozhen of Liuhe Xinyi Quan. He is the creator of the Chen Style Xinyi Hunyuantaiji System, a style of Taijiquan that combines Chen Style with Qigong training.

**Fengchi:**

On the nape, below the occipital bone, on the level of Fengfu (DU16), in the depression between the upper ends of the sternocleidomastoid and trapezius muscles.

**Fire Leak (Zouhuo)**

This refers to the Qigong Psychosis of using too much mind-intent. Some of the symptoms are light-headedness, headaches, involuntary body movements, etc.

**Fire Time (Huohou)**

Its direct meaning is "Crucial Moment". The three indispensable elements of internal training are: furnace, medicine and crucial timing. These three elements in turn mean: the proper body posture and alignment; the achievement of separating the body into Jing, Qi and Shen; and the crucial time during the training process to put the three into one. In other words, crucial moment also means that during the training process, one must learn to use breathing as a regulator of the three elements. This is one of the reasons why in the Hunyuan system, breathing is hardly mentioned. Breathing, which is crucial moment, can only come into play when the Jing, Qi and Shen are ready to be combined. Many people start regulating the breath at the early stage of training. This will often result in Qi Psychosis. The entire body's normal system will be put into chaos by focusing on breathing if the



breathing is not used on Jing, Qi and Shen, the three elements that are often not present in people without training.

#### Five Animals Frolic Qigong

Created by Hua Tuo, the famous doctor in Chinese history. The five animals in this exercise are: tiger, deer, bear, ape and bird.

#### Five Bushels of Rice Sect

Founded by Zhang Ling in East Han Dynasty. It was named so because membership fee was five liters of rice. It was started in today's Sichuan Province. From around the year 143, this sect was the national religion for 30 years. This sect reveres Lao Zi as its highest idol. Zhang Ling was named Heavenly Master. This is also the time that Daoism became formally regarded as a religion.

#### Five Qi

Commonly refers to: wind, cold, dampness, heat and dryness.

#### Focus on One

This refers to the practice of putting one's attention on one point of the body. In different Qigong practices, different points are used. There is no real difference in exactly which point one should focus on. It is merely a matter of choice. It is this process, not the exact point, that is the key to success in getting rid of disease. Ge Hong in his "Embracing the Simplicity" pointed out that from the head to toe, from front to the back, each school has its own points of focus. They are all valid in healing the ailment.

#### Four "Must"

Clinch teeth and drop eyelids;  
Sink shoulders and pull down elbows;  
Loosen neck and empty the chest;  
Relax the waist and loosen the stomach.

Gang Rou Xiang Ji

Hardness and softness complement each other.

Ge Hong (281-341 A.D.)

Also known as Pu Baozi, which means "Embracing the Simplicity." He wrote the book of the same name "Embracing the Simplicity" which is now a classic included in the Daoist Cannons. The book is composed of 70 volumes with Inner Dan and Outer Dan two sections. The word "Golden Dan" (Golden Elixir) was also first used in this book. He is an important figure in the field of chemistry in Chinese history. He started as an alchemist. His research was mainly concentrated on mixing chemicals to make an "Elixir of Life". Ge Hong is also considered one of the foremost traditional Chinese medicine doctors. His books on medicine and "Embracing the Simplicity" is still widely used and extensively studied in medical schools of traditional Chinese medicine in China today.

Golden Elixir

See Jin Dan

Gong fu

High level of skill. Sometimes referred to as martial arts.

Grain Path (Gu Dao)

The last section of the small intestine to the anus.

Great Medicine

Refers to the materials for inner Dan training. They are the three bodily treasures of Jing, Qi and Shen.

Guang Chengzi

One of the earliest immortals regarded by Daoists. Zhuangzi recorded a story of the Yellow Emperor asking Guang Chengzi for advice on the secret of longevity. This story is commonly regarded as the evidence of beginning of Daoist Qigong practices.

Guanyuan

See Lower Dantian

Han Xiangzi

One of the Eight Immortals. He was the nephew of the famous literary author Han Yu. He had an open and wild character and was capable of amazing feasts. It was said that he would make peonies blossom in winter.

Hao Datong (1140-1212)

One of the 7 Authentic Men of the Northern Sect. He was born in today's Muping, Shandong Province. In his early years, he was given the secrets of the "Book of Changes" in a dream. He spent most of his time in Yi Jing (Book of Changes) based fortune telling. Immortal Wang Chongyang pointed him towards the Dao. Later he established the Hua Shan Sect of the All Truth School of Daoism. He was also known as the Authentic Man of Guangning, the name of his birthplace.

Harmonize and Unite the Four Shapes (He He Si Xiang)

This is a requirement in Qigong practice. In order to control the mind-intent into one on the Dantian, one has to make the eyes look inwards, listen inwards, breath slowly and reduce the use of verbal language. As these five parts correspond to the five inner organs, this training will solidify the inner strength.

He Tu (Chart of He)

The legendary picture that was said to be the origin of the "Book of Changes". Originally this theory came from the Confucian school of thought in China. Ancient records indicate that the "Chart came from He, the river, while the Book came from Luo, another river." Together with Luo Shu (the Chart of Luo), it forms the foundation of the origin of the entire Chinese culture. The river mentioned in the "Picture of He" refers to the Yellow River, the mother of Chinese civilization. The river mentioned in the "Chart of Luo" refers to the Luo

River, in central China. It was said that at the beginning of time (about 26 centuries B.C), there was a dragon that came out of the Yellow River. It carried on its back the Picture of Luo. Fuyi made the "Eight Diagram" based on this picture. When Yu (about 21 centuries B.C.) conquered the floor in the south, a mysterious turtle came out of the River of Luo with the "Chart of Luo" on its back.

#### He Xiang (Immortal Auntie He)

One of the Eight Immortals. She was a legendary figure from the Tang Dynasty. She was born in today's Guangdong Province. By mistake, she swallowed yunmu powder and became an immortal. She was able to walk hundreds of miles a day and travel among mountains effortlessly.

#### Heavenly Eye

The space between the eyebrows.

#### Heavenly Gate

Nose

#### Heavenly Master

Refers to one who reaches the Dao. Commonly refers to Zhang Ling, the founder of the Sect of the Five Liters of Rice.

#### Heavenly Numbers

Odd numbers such as 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

#### Heavenly River

See Upper Magpie Bridge.

#### Heel Breathing (Zhong Xi)

First mentioned by Zhuangzi in his article "The Grand Master". "The Authentic Man breathes with his heel while the layman breathes with his throat."

#### Hegu:

It is also called Tiger's Mouth. It is on the dorsum of the hand, between the 1st and 2nd metacarpal bones, and on the radial side of the midpoint of the 2nd

metacarpal bone. This point is used in Hunyuan Qigong in the last exercise, the Health Massages.

Hu Lei Jia:

Thunder style. Also derived from Chen Style.

Hu Yaozhen (1895-1972)

He was a famous Xinyi Liuhequan Grand Master. He was both a martial artist and a Qigong healer. He worked in a Western country run hospital in Beijing. He was the vice president of the Beijing Martial Arts Society (Chen Fake was the president). He reached the highest level in Qigong and was termed the father of modern Qigong in China. He is one of the people responsible for the use of the term Qigong.

Hua Tuo (?-208).

Han Dynasty famous physician and Qigong master. From historical records, we know that he created this exercise form. But unfortunately the original exercise he created didn't survive. What we have today is a new system based on the idea about his creation. It was said that one of Hua Tuo's students of the "Five Animal Frolic" form, Wu Pu, lived over 90 years.

Huagai

Refers to the lungs.

Huang Di (Yellow Emperor)

In Chinese legends, he is considered a chief of an ancient clan from which all Chinese people involved. He was accredited for the inventions in weaponry, boats and carts, the bow and arrow, garments, language and medicine.

Huiyin

It is the point between the rectum and the genitalia.

Jade Hare (Yu Tu)

In common usage, it is analogy for the moon. It signifies a Yin side of matter. The evolution of this concept is quite an interesting one. According to He

Xin, Jade Hare is a gradual mistake of the original idea of the protective animal sign of Tiger. The mistake occurred because of the sounds for both. Tiger is "Hu", while Hare is "Tu".

#### Jade Pillow Pass (Yu Zhen Guan)

The most difficult gate in the Small Heaven circuit training method. It is under the Jade Pillow point at the back of the head. This is the smallest pass like a bottleneck. It is also called Iron Wall.

#### Jade Pond

Mouth

#### Ji

Third of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. An offensive force transmitted by following the opponent's energy. Actually means to squeeze. It is the application of Peng forward. Sticking forward.

#### Jiaji Pass

One of the three difficult passes along the DU meridian during Small Heaven training. It is also referred to as Lulu Pass and Double Pass. It is located on the back spine line where the two elbow tips join if one lies down and puts the elbows on the floor next to the body.

#### Jiang Gong

Another name for Dantian.

#### Jianjing

On the shoulder, directly above the nipple, at the midpoint of the line connecting Dazhui (DU 14) and the acromion.

#### Jibengong:

Basic training or exercises.

#### Jin Dan

The Golden Elixir. This is the external object of the Daoist cultivation. This study is aimed at producing an elixir that can preserve life to eternity. This pursuit later is divided into two different branches. One is

called the school of External Dan, a physical chemical elixir that one can take like a pill (as in modern medicine today). Its texts consist of recipes, along with descriptions of ingredients, ritual rules, and passages concerned with the cosmological associations of minerals and metals, instruments, and operations. The other school is the Internal Dan, which is the attainment of a Golden Elixir in the Dantian of the human body to achieve eternal life. This is accomplished through internal Qigong cultivation. Internal alchemy developed as an independent discipline around the beginning of the Tang period. It borrows a substantial part of its vocabulary from its earlier counterpart.

#### Jing Luo

Main and collateral channels where vital energy circulates.

#### Kao

Number 8 of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. A force exerted by the shoulder or back. Kao energy requires that the whole body be used as one unit. It is Peng all over the body. Hitting like a mountain.

#### Lan Caihe

One of the Eight Immortals. He was a person who did everything backward. He only wore one shoe. He wore thick quilted clothes during summer and thin shirts during winter. He often slept with one layer of thin clothes but steam would come out of his body. He was often drunk and sang strange songs that he made up. When people gave him money, he would string them together and pull them behind him when he walked. He never looked back to see if any money was lost. He would end up giving all the money to whoever was poorer than he.

#### Laogong

At the centre of the palm, between the 2nd and 3rd

metacarpal bones, but close to the latter, and in the part touching the tip of the middle finger when a fist is made.

#### Large Heaven

Also known as the marriage of Heaven and Earth, the return of the Golden Fluid to the Dan.

#### Lead (Qian)

The metal substance "lead". It is one of the two major ingredients for Daoist Golden Elixir Cultivation. Lead represents Yang in the Yin and Yang pair.

#### Li Er

See Laozi.

#### Li Tieguai (Iron Cane Li)

One of the Eight Immortals. It was said that he met the reappeared body of Laozi and understood the Dao. When his Qi was traveling, his disciple cremated his body by mistake. He could not return to his physical body so he went into the body of a dead pauper. He always looks unclean and always had his stomach exposed. He splashed water on a bamboo cane and made it turn into an iron cane, thus the nickname Li Tieguai.

#### Lie

Also spelled as Lieh

Number 6 of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. Usually is a technique that causes a split in direction of energy. Bone breaking. Peng applied to break something.

#### Lieh

Same as Lie.

#### Linggu

See Lower Dantian

#### Listen to the Breaths (Ting Xi)

A method used in Qigong tranquility training by focusing the mind on the counting of breaths. It is not important to remember the numbers. Just simply



count. This method is used to remove the mind from the complex issues that the person is dealing with on a daily basis. The purpose, therefore, is to return the mind to an empty state. It is not literally a method to listen to or to count the breaths.

#### Liu Haizhan

Number 4 of the Five Northern Ancestors of All Truth Sect. His birth and death dates are not known. He lived during the time of the Five Dynasties. He had also served as prime minister for the King of Yan in today's Beijing area. He had always enjoyed the learning of Daoism as a hobby. One day, a man who called himself "the Upright Yang Child" came to see him. Liu accorded him hospitality. The man asked for ten eggs and ten coins. The man piled the coins on top of each other and then on top of that pile put all the eggs on top of each other. Liu shouted, "Danger!" The man replied, "Your life of fame and luxury is even more dangerous to you than this!" He then threw one coin at the eggs and it went through them all. He disappeared after that without a trace.

Liu was enlightened after this lesson. He resigned his government post and retired to Hua Mountain and Zhongnan Mountains. He disappeared into the mountains after reaching the Dao.

#### Lower Dantian

Also known as: Qihai (Sea of Qi), Guanyuan (Original Gate), Mingmen (Life Gate), Shenlu (Furnace of Spirit), Tiangen (Root of Heaven), and Linggu (Valley of Soul).

#### Lower Magpie Bridge (Xia Queqiao)

One is in the Weilu point. This is the yang point. The other one is in the Gudao point (anus), which is the yin point. This bridge is part of the connection of the Small Heaven.

#### Lu Dongbin (798-?)

His Daoist name was Pure Yang Child. At the age of 20

he refused to marry. After 23 years of studying, he refused to participate in the national exams. Instead, he decided to travel the world. In Chang An (today's Xi An in Northwest China), he met Immortal Zhong Lique. After 10 tests of character, Zhong bestowed the art of the Heavenly Disappearing Sword Form of the Large Heaven School and the secret manuscript of the Dragon and Tiger's Golden Elixir. Lu then went into seclusion in Zhongnan Mountains. At the age of 100, he had the face of a child and could walk several hundred li<sup>167</sup> a day. He is ranked number two of the Northern Five Ancestors and is one of the Eight Immortals known today.

One day he was drinking in a wine-shop and showed no signs of paying. Finally, instead of paying, he painted two dancing cranes on the wall of the inn. These cranes became so famous that they more than paid for the meal. When the debt was paid, however, the cranes detached themselves from the wall and flew away.

He turned an ordinary well into one that produced wine for a certain time. On another occasion while the innkeeper is warming the wine, Lu causes the friend he was drinking with to live through his entire life in a dream.

Lu

Second of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. A sticking energy towards self and the side. Peng applied towards self and the side.

LUMEN

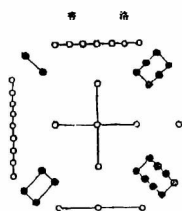
Lumen is the part of the skull that joins last for babies.

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<sup>167</sup> One li is half a kilometer.

## Luo Shu (Book of Luo)

See He Tu.



## Ma Danyang (1123-1183)

He was born in Shanxi but moved to Muping, Shandong during Jin Dynasty. He was an internal Dan sect Daoist. He was the head of the Northern Seven Trueman. His wife was Sun Buer. With his wife, they are the only known couple in history who trained together and reached immortality together.

## Making of Medicine (Cai Yao)

In Qigong terms, it refers to the act of controlling the Jing, Qi, and Shen.

## Marriage of Heart and Kidney

This is a main method in the Small Heaven method. It is also a foundation method used in Hunyuan Qigong. The heart is on top as fire while the kidney is at the bottom as water. The heart must be dropped into the water to keep it from other heating. The kidneys must be brought up to the heart to keep it from getting cold. The healthy state of the heart should be cool while the healthy state of the kidneys should be warm. Our daily life activities normally cause the Qi to rise into the heart, causing it to over heat. They also cause the kidneys to over work in terms of sexual activity, making them too cold. This is why the marriage of the heart and kidneys are so crucial in Hunyuan Qigong training.

## Mercury (Geng)

One of the two major ingredients of Daoist Golden Elixir

cultivation. Mercury represents the Yin in the Yin and Yang pair.

### Mingmen

Translates into Life Gate. It has been used to refer to 1) the navel; 2) Dantian; 3) acupuncture point on the lower part of the spine; 4) the two kidneys; 5) the right kidney; 6) the function of the body that is achieved in the space between the two kidneys.

In Hunyuan Qigong, this term is commonly used to refer to the rear Dantian. It is a point for focus of mind-intent.

### Monkey of the Heart and Horse of the Mind

Generally this term refers to the state when one cannot control his/her mental activity. A crucial requirement of Hunyuan Qigong meditation is to stop thinking and quiet the body down. Only when the monkey of the heart and the horse of the mind are tied down to the post of Dantian, will one go into true tranquility.

### Mysterious Cavity (Xuan Guan)

a) Also refers to Dantian.

b) Refers to the point where the original Qi is stored in the body. If one knows where it is, one can gain Qi and open both Small and Large Heavens easily. Indeed it is a hotly debated and most mysterious point. A saying about this point goes like this, "It cannot be found in the body but it is not outside of body. It is everywhere but it cannot be found anywhere. If you happen to stumble upon it and see it as what it is, you will laugh so bad that you cannot possibly survive the laughter." It is safe to say that this one point has been the "Secret" for thousands of years.

### Mysterious Well (Xuan Quan)

Refers to the saliva in the mouth.

### Nei gong

Internal training. Sometimes synonymous with the term Qigong. In traditional circles, Neigong has a

connotation towards a martial art type of Qigong while the term Qigong often refers to general health exercises.

#### Neiguan

Acupuncture point located 2 inches above the crease line on the inside of the wrist. This point is used in the 12th exercise of the Hunyuan Qigong form.

#### Northern Five Ancestors

The five founders of the Northern Sect during the Yuan Dynasty. They are: Wang Xuanpu, Zhong Liquan, Lu Dongbin, Liu Cao, and Wang Chongyang. This sect requires the training to start with the mind, not with the physical body. It is very difficult to master and there have been many problems associated with its practices.

#### Old Frame (Lao Jia)

The style of Chen Family Taijiquan that was practiced prior to Chen Fake's time. Chen went to Beijing to teach in 1928. Later on in his life around 1950s, he taught a modified version that was characterized with more circles and larger movements of the body. This new way of practicing was termed the "New Frame". Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang and Chen Zhaokui of Beijing are major proponents of the "New Frame". Members of the Chen Family in the Chen Village continue to practice the "Old Frame".

#### Open-Close (Kaihe)

The physical movement of opening and closing the chest. It also refers to breathing. Inhale is considered as closing while exhale is considered opening.

#### Peng Zu

Legendary figure in history. It was said that he was the 8th generation grandson of the Yellow Emperor. He lived 800 years. At the time he was prime minister in Yin Dynasty, he was 700 years old. He has been a symbol of longevity in China.

Peng:

Number 1 of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. It has been translated inaccurately in North America as "Ward Off" energy. It's considered the central energy of the 8 different energies in Taiji. It is omnipotent in Taiji practice. It is also a technique of energy going upwards.

Pu Baozi

Name of Daoist also named Ge Hong.

Title of a book by Ge Hong.

Qi:

Vital internal energy.

Qigong Psychosis, Zou Huo Ru Mo

Also know as "Enter the Devil's Land". This is a state when a Qigong practitioner goes astray. Some of the known phenomena are: feeling of anxiety, delusional, dizziness, headaches, emotional swings. In some serious cases the practitioner is rendered incapable of functioning normally. Causes of this include sudden surprises during deep Qigong practice. This occurrence is extremely rare with beginners, as the practitioner is not deep into a meditative state of being yet. This is one of the reasons why in ancient times, high level Qigong practitioners would seal themselves off in a cave for an extended period time for their refinement training. Remedy for Qigong psychosis is to continue to focus on the emptiness. It is important to point out that all visual and physical phenomena experienced by the practitioners are considered imaginations of one's own mind and thus delusional. One must continue to ignore these occurrences.

In Hunyuan Qigong, there has been almost no case of psychosis reported in the last 20 years.

Qigong

A special form of exercise that is aimed at bringing out the inner energy of a person. There are many different styles of Qigong. Qigong is also divided into Taoist

Meditation Qigong, Medical Qigong and Martial Art Qigong. Chen Style Xinyi Hunyuan Qigong system belongs to martial arts Qigong.

Qihai

See Lower Dantian

Qihaishu:

On the low back, below the spinous process of the 3rd lumbar vertebra, 1.5 cun lateral to the posterior midline.

Qin na:

Capturing technique; joint locking.

Qing gong:

Lightness type of Qigong.

Qiu Chuji (1148-1127)

One of the Seven Authentic Men of the All Truth Sect of the North. Nicknamed Long Spring Child. Born in Qixia, Shandong Province. Studied under Wang Chongyang and then after Wang's death, under Ma Yu. In the year of 1174, he mediated in a cave in Panxi in Shanxi Province for 6 years. He often begged for food and always carried a straw-made raincoat with him. He was thus also nicknamed Mr. Raincoat. When the first emperor of Yuan Dynasty sought his advice on longevity, he offered the key words of "light heartedness and void of desires". In 1269, the emperor named him "the Immortal" and benighted him "the Grand Master". He is placed as the head of all Daoists under heaven. His body is buried in the White Cloud Temple in Beijing, which still exists today.

Quan:

Fist; martial art.

Red Dragon (Chilong)

a) refers to sperm. b) refers to the tongue. c) refers to the menstruation.

## Ren Mai

One of the two meridians that comprise the Small Heaven. It is the meridian that starts from the point under the nose and reaches down to the huiyin point at the bottom.

## Retracting the Heart

In Qigong practice, the first task is to retract the heart to its place. This means to expel impure thoughts and return the heart to its proper bodily function.

## Return the Jing to the Brain (Huan Jing Bu Nao)

This is the most controversial topic in Qigong studies today. The idea that the Jing, sperm energy, can be sent directly to the brain through the spinal cord is the core principle of Qigong training. Without this principle, one might as well give up Qigong training. The problem is that this principle is so clearly defined and stated. It is also specific enough to allow scrutiny. The result is obvious. Modern science cannot find evidence that the sperm can be turned into an energy form that goes directly to the brain. There is no physical connection between the Huiyin and the brain. In order to achieve Qi, one has to take a giant leap forward and accept this idea without question. Otherwise, the foundation of Qigong will collapse.

Empirical evidence in Qigong practice have repeatedly pointed to the fact that at a high level, the practitioner does feel a surge of energy rushing up the spine to the brain.

## Reversed Breathing

When inhaling, the stomach contracts. When exhaling, the stomach expands.

## Ruzhong:

On the chest, in the 4th intercostal space, at the centre of the nipple, 4 cun lateral to the anterior midline.

## Sanjiaoshu:

On the low back, below the spinous process of the 1st



lumbar vertebra, 1.5 cun lateral to the posterior midline.

#### Sanyinjiao:

On the medial side of the leg, 3 cun above the tip of the medial malleolus, posterior to the medial border of the tibia.

#### Seven Cavities (Qiao)

The seven holes in the head: eyes, ears, nostrils, and the mouth.

#### Seven Emotions

They are: happiness, anger, worry, contemplation, sadness, terror, and surprise.

#### Seven Levels of Qigong Practice

- a) free from disease.
- b) return to childhood.
- c) become an immortal who can travel freely and live with no determined end date.
- d) body is surrounded by Qi and the body can disappear and appear at will. This is a Trueman.
- e) Qi has turned into Spirit. He is called a Spiritman.
- f) spirit joins the Dao, the practitioner becomes part of the Dao. He is the Sage.
- g) He is above any description.

It has been commonly agreed upon historically that only the first level is achievable by man.

#### Seven Northern Trueman

Ma Danyang, Tan Chuduan, Lu Chuxuan, Wang Chuyi, Qiu Chuji, Wang Chuyi and Hao Datong, and Sun Buer,. They respectively created the sects of Yuxian (Meeting Immortal), Nanwu (Southern Emptiness), Suishan (Follow the Mountain), Longmen (Dragon Gate), Yushan (Yu Mountain), Huashan (Hua Mountain) and Qingjing (Tranquility). The Dragon Sect of Qiu Chuji is the most prosperous.

### Shaking Power (Dou Jin)

Taijiquan shaking/explosive power. A major method of issuing power in the Chen Style of Taijiquan. It is also characteristic of Chen Style Taijiquan. Hunyuan Taijiquan retains this special power but uses it rarely.

### Shen Fa

Taijiquan Body exercises.

### Shen

Spirit

### Shenlu

See Lower Dantian

### Shenshu

On the low back, below the spinous process of the 2nd lumbar vertebra, 1.5 cun lateral to the posterior midline.

### Shi Tai (1022-1158)

He was born in Changzhou, Jiangsu Province. He was the second of the Five Southern Ancestors. He was given the method of the Large Heaven by Immortal Zhang Boduan.

### Shousanli:

On the radial side of the dorsal surface of the forearm and on the line connecting Yangxi (LI 5) and Quchi (LI 11), 2 cun below the cubital crease.

### Shower (Mu Yu)

Special term in Small Heaven training. It indicates the special pauses in timing and mind-intent during the circulation of the Qi along the DU and REN meridians. There are two such pauses during the training.

### Si Ma Cheng Zhen (647-735)

Tang Dynasty Daoist. His name is Ziwei. His Daoist name is the White Cloud Child. From Wen County<sup>168</sup>,

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<sup>168</sup> This is the same county where the famous Chen Village of Chen Style Taijiquan is.

Henan Province. Three Emperors of the Tang Dynasty favored him. He incorporated ideas from Buddhism and Confucianism into Daoism and wrote many books including "On Forgetting Through Sitting".

#### Silk Reeling

A series of exercises designed to promote a special type of energy in Chen Style Taijiquan. Some masters simply call these type exercises basic training or foundations. It is found in all styles of Taijiquan, but more prominently in Chen Style Taijiquan.

Also known as chan si gong.

#### Six Desires

Life, death, sound, sight, taste and smell.

#### Sixteen Feelings

The 16 different feelings of Qigong state are: movement, itchiness, lightness, heaviness, coldness, warmth, slipperiness, falling, shivers, heat, floating, sinking, hardness, ripples, softness and astringency.

#### Small Heaven

Also called the Ziwu Heavenly Circle, the marriage of Kan and Li and the Jade Fluid Returns to the Dan. This is the first level of internal Dan training, namely the process of turning the Jing into Qi. Internal Qi will travel up the DU meridian starting from Huiyin and will continue to travel down the REN meridian starting at the Upper Magpie Bridge. As in this method, the Qi travels in a restricted area of a closed-circuit loop it is called the Small Heaven. It takes a total of 36 breaths, thus also called the 36 Small Heaven. This method of training is designed to solidify the internal Qi and to build up the internal protection ability to fend off external invasions of influences such as disease. The travel lines of the DU and REN meridians are the same as those specified in acupuncture charts.

#### Southern Sect

Also called Tiantai Sect. Founded by Zhang Ziyang. This

sect was named so because Zhang Ziyang was from Tiantai mountain of Zhejiang Province.

#### Static Qigong (Jinggong)

Zhanzhuang, sitting meditation, and other types of static Qigong forms.

#### Sun Buer (1119-1182)

She was also named Sun Fuchun. Her Daoist name of Buer means "Not number 2". She was the wife of Ma Danyang and was one of the Seven Authentic Men of the North. She was born in Muping, Shandong province. After receiving the Dao from Wang Chongyang in her hometown together with her husband, she moved to Luoyang and established the "Tranquility Sect" of the "All Truth School" of Daoism.

#### Sun Simiao (581-682)

He was a child prodigy. He had mastered the Chinese classics by age 20 and then became a well-known medical practitioner. His ideas and collected prescriptions were recorded in the books "Prescriptions Worth A Thousand Gold" and "Precious Formulas for Emergency". He helped develop nutritional medicine; for example, recommending seaweed to people living in the mountain regions who suffered from goiter, and recommending liver of ox and sheep for person suffering from night blindness. He was also a Taoist alchemist, seeking demon dispelling remedies, including spells, herbal formulas, and toxic alchemical preparations.

#### Sun style

Major style created by Sun Lutang (1861-1932).

#### Tame the Tiger

Refers to the act of producing more kidney water to douse the fire in the heart.

#### The Butterfly Dream

In the book "Zhuangzi", Zhuangzi related the story of his dream in which that he was a butterfly. He felt so

free and natural as a butterfly. When he awoke the next morning, he told his friend about his dream. When his friend commented on the strangeness of his dream, he responded that the dream was not strange, the real strange thing was that he was not sure whether he was a man who had a butterfly dream or he was a butterfly who was having a dream as a man.

This is a classic story in Daoism, often used to illustrate that the line between reality and fantasy is not that clear at all.

#### The Eight Immortals (Baxian):

Li Tieguai, Zhong Liquan, Zhang Guolao, He Xiang, Lan Caihe, Lu Dongbin, Han Xiangzi and Cao Guojiu.

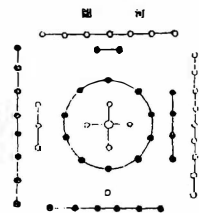
#### The Five Ancestors of the Southern School

Zhang Ziyang, Shi Tai, Xue Daoguan, Chen Nan, and Bai Yuzhan

#### The Seven Authentic Men of the Southern School

Zhang Ziyang, Shi Tai, Xue Daoguan, Chen Nan, Bai Yuzhan, Liu Yongnian, and Peng Si.

The significance is that the entire Chinese civilization is based on these two charts and yet there is no definitive understanding of the origin or the meaning of either.



#### The Spirit of the Valley (Gu Shen)

The reference Laozi made to the Dao. Gu means Valley. It is used as an analogy for emptiness. Shen has the connotation of changes. Lao Zi used the words, "Gu Shen does not die" in his "Dao De Jing".

### The Three Passes (San Guan)

The three gates in the small heaven circle. They are Weilu, Jiaji and Yuzhen.

### Thirteen Postures

Peng, Lu, Ji, An, Cai, Lie, Zhou, Kao, Jin, Tui, Gu, Pan, Ding. (Ward Off, Roll Back, Press, Push, Grab, Yank, Elbow Strike, Shoulder Strike, Step Forward, Step Backward, Turn Left, Turn Right, Center Equilibrium.)

### Three Flowers Gather On the Top

It is a level in the Qigong practice. This level is reached when Jing, Qi and Shen will merge into one. The practitioner will experience the visual display of three flowers coming out of the top of the head.

### Three Gates, as in 3 Guan

### Three Genuine Fires

Upper fire is in the heart, the middle fire is in the kidneys and the lower fire is in the bladder.

### Three Jiao

The Triple Burner System. It is a functional system on the back of the body, with no apparent physical body parts.

### Three Materials

Heaven, Earth and Man.

### Three Treasures of Heaven

They are the: Sun, the Moon and the Stars.

### Three Treasures of the Body

They are: Jing (Essence), Qi, and Shen (Spirit).

### Three Warmers/Burners

Functional entities of the body on the back. They do not physically exist in the body. They function as regulators of the body.

Also known as San Jiao.

### Tian Gen (Heaven's Root)

See Lower Dantian

Tie Sha Zhang  
Iron palm.

Tingjin

The ability to feel, sense and anticipate the opponents next move.

Tu Na

Ancient deep breathing exercise. Zhuangzi was the first to mention this type of Qigong in "Keyi".

Tui Shou

Taijiquan push hand.

Turn the Jing into Qi (Lian Jing Hua Qi)

The reason that Jing, Qi and Shen are considered the three treasures is because they are the three representatives or aspects of the same original Hunyuan Qi in the body. The process of Hunyuan Qigong practice is to return the division of three back into the unification of one. The division of the three treasures are: 1) the movement of it is Qi; 2) the solidification of it is Jing; and 3) the utility of it is the Shen. The process of turning the Jing into Qi is called the Small Heaven Method.

Turn the Qi into Spirit (Lian Qi Hua Shen)

The process of reaching the highest physical level of Hunyuan Qigong practice. The relationship of the three treasures is: Jing can be turned into Qi and Qi can be turned into Shen. Both Jing and Qi are the foundations of Shen and Shen is the destination of both Jing and Qi. When both Jing and Qi are full, naturally the Shen will be strong in the form of clear. When the Shen is clear, one will have amazing mental capacity including good memory and clarity in thinking.

Upper Clear Sect (Shang Qing Pai)

This sect of Daoism was originated in the Dongjin Dynasty of roughly 364 A.D. The commonly regarded first master is Yang Yi. This section stresses the

importance of meditation and downplays the use of internal and external Dan training.

#### Upper Dantian

Normally regarded as the point between the eyes.

#### Upper Magpie Bridge (Shang Queqiao)

One is in the Yintang point under the nose. This is the yang point of this bridge. The other one is in the Shangyin point, which is the joint of the upper palate and the upper teeth. This is the yin bridge. This is part of the connection of the Small Heaven.

#### Use Fire (Jinhuo which means "Enter Fire")

Inner Dan training terminology. It refers to the use of breathing to enhance the rushing of the Qi up the DU meridian during the Zishi time between 11:00 pm and 1:00 am. The use of fire can only occur during the yang hours. The use of breath is the yang number of 36 breaths per cycle.

#### Vibration of the Six Roots

The six roots are: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. On the verge of the merging of the Jing, Qi and Shen, the six roots will vibrate first. This vibration will be followed by the feelings of attainment of the Grand Medicine. They are: Dantian becomes a furnace; both kidneys are feeling boiled; golden flames in the eyes; strong wind in the ears; sound of vulture; and whole body is filled with fresh fluid.

#### Waiguan:

On the dorsal side of the forearm and on the line connecting Yangchi (SJ 4) and the tip of the olecranon, 2 cun proximal to the dorsal crease of the wrist, between the radius and ulna.

#### Wang Chongyang (1112-1170)

Founder of the Daoist All Truth Sect. He was one of the Five Northern Ancestors of the All Truth Sect of Daoism in China. The other four were: Wang Xuanpu, Zhong Lique, Lu Dongbin and Lu Haizhan. Wang Chongyang



was nicknamed the Double Yang Child. It was said that at the age of 48 he encountered the materialized body of Lu Dongbin (at the time, Lu was long dead) and was given the secret of training method. He started the All Truth Sect in Shandong Province with Ma Danyang and Sun Buer. He was a promoter of the idea of amalgamating Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism as one. He did not stress physical exercises and the use of spells. The training of the mind was the priority of this sect.

#### Wang Chuyi (1142-1217)

He was also called Wang Yuyang, or Quan Yangzi. The meaning of his name is "All Yang Child", as in yin and yang. He was one of the seven Northern Trueman.

#### Wang Nian (Improper Thoughts)

This refers to all improper thoughts that occur during Qigong training. The proliferation of improper thoughts is the results of desires. Hunyuan Qigong training requires that the practitioner have positive outlook on life and on reality. People who have unrealistic expectations should not be involved in Hunyuan Qigong training. Hunyuan Qigong cannot be used as a means of escape from reality. Contrary to some misconceptions about Qigong, Hunyuan Qigong stresses real and quantifiable results, not unwanted imaginations.

The ancients say that the rise of the delusional thoughts is the death of life. The death of delusion is the beginning of reality and Qi.

#### Wei Baoyang

He lived during the time of the Eastern Han Dynasty. There is no record of his lineage. It was said that he accidentally received a copy of "The Dragon and the Tiger Cannons" He later on wrote "Zhou Yi Can Tong Qi" (The Reference Book to the Book of Changes), which became a major cannon in the Daoist library.

Weizhong:

At the midpoint of the popliteal crease, between the tendons of the biceps muscle of the thigh and the semitendinous muscle.

White Tiger

Refers to the lungs.

Wu shu:

Martial art.

Wu style

Major style created by Wu Jianquan (1870-1942).

Wuji Picture

Name of a book written by Chen Tuan during the Northern Song Dynasty. It is a picture of the internal Daoist training method. This is a book that has heavily influenced internal Dan Daoist throughout the centuries. Zhou Dunyi's Taiji Picture was refined on the basis of this Wuji picture.

Wuji

Literally means "No Polarity". It is the state when the universe was not yet born. It's a state of emptiness and nothingness.

Wuu style: Also known as Wu/Hao Style.

Major style created by Wuu Yuxiang (1812-1880).

Xiao Jia

Small frame.

Xin Jia

New frame.

Xing Ming Shuang Xiu (Mind and Life Double Nurture)

Xing refers to the mind while Ming refers to life, which is activity. The double nurturing of both is included in the Hunyuan Qigong system as Static and Mobile exercises. Traditionally the Northern School stresses the nurturing of the mind while the Southern School stresses the nurturing of life.

### Xuan Ying

Center point under the tongue that produces saliva.  
The other points are: golden fluid on the left and jade liquid on the right.

### Yang Style

Major style created by Yang Luchan (1799-1872).

### Yellow Courtyard (Huang Ting)

Position to focus mind intent to during Qigong practice.  
Yellow indicates earth. Courtyard indicates open hollow space. This place is also referred to as Dantian. There is a classic called "The Cannon of the Yellow Courtyard). It was said that Chen Wangting was holding this book all the time during the time when he created the Chen Style Taijiquan.

### Yellow Courtyard Cannon (Huang Ting Jing)

It is an important Daoist meditation training classic. It was written by a woman Daoist Wei Cunhua of Jin Dynasty. The book was divided into "Inner Image Cannon" and "Outer Image Cannon". There are 620 verses of 7 characters each. The total words used in this work are 4,368. The main idea of the author is that "the true Dao is not complex and that Spirit exists everywhere in the body." "If one wants to live long, he has to nurture the Dantian."

### Yi Lu

First routine.

### Yi

Mind intent.

### Yin Xi

He lived during the Spring and Autumn period. It was said that one day he saw purple clouds coming from the east and knew that a Trueman was coming his way. He waited on the road for several days and met Laozi there. He welcomed Lao Zi to his house as his teacher. Later, Lao Zi gave him the "Tao De Jing" on departure.

Thus it is believed that the most revered Daoist cannon, "Dao De Jing", was written by Lao Zi in his house in Shanxi Province. Yin Xi achieved the Dao and was called Mr. Wenshi, Beginning of Literature.

#### Yin Yang Reversal

This is the general idea that the reversal of life and death will open the door to life. The practice today in parks by many early risers, of walking backwards is a practice based literally on this doctrine.

Specifically in Qigong practices, the practice of the Small Heaven requires the sinking of the heart into the kidneys and the raising of the kidneys up to the heart. This is another example of the reversal of yin yang. In Hunyuan Qigong, exercise number 6 (Single Leg Descending and Ascending) and 7 (Double Leg Descending and Ascending) are examples of the reversal of yin and yang.

#### Yingxiang:

In the nasolabial groove, beside the midpoint of the lateral border of the nasal ala.

#### Yong Quan:

On the sole, in the depression appearing on the anterior part of the sole when the foot is in the planar flexion, approximately at the junction of the anterior third and posterior two-thirds of the line connecting the base of the 2nd and 3rd toes and the heel.

#### Yuzhen:

On the occiput, 2.5 cun directly above the midpoint of the posterior hairline and 1.3 cun lateral to the midline, in the depression on the level of the upper border of the external occipital protuberance.

#### Zhan Zhuang

Also called stake standing and pile standing. Stance exercise.

#### Zhang Boduan (984-1082)

Also known as Zhang Ziyang, Zhang Pingshu. He was

born in today's Zhejiang Province. He was the creator of the Southern School of the Inner Dan Sect of Daoism. It was said that he met a traveling Authentic Man in Chengdu in 1069 and received the secrets of the Dao. Because his activities were mainly centered on the Tiantai Mountain area, his school is also referred to as the Tiantai School. Later on he put all his knowledge and experience into the classic "Enlightenment" (Wu Zhen Pian).

#### Zhang Guolao

One of the Eight Immortals of Daoism. He was said to have lived during the time of the Tang Dynasty. During the time of Empress Wuhou, the emperor issued a royal invitation to him to come to the royal court. The messenger came back with the news that he had passed away. Many years later in 733, he was seen again. The new emperor sent for him again. He came to the capital to see the emperor. When asked about the secrets of longevity. He politely replied that it was a secret that he could not impart to people outside of the Dao. The emperor promised him marriage to the princess but he smiled without an answer. Then he requested to be allowed to return to the mountains. He later returned to Qixia, Shandong Province. He was often seen riding a white donkey. He was reported to travel thousands of miles per day on this donkey. When he slept, he would fold the donkey up and use it as pillow. The next day he would put water in the paper donkey and it would come alive again.

#### Zhang Wuming (Zhang No Dream)

Northern Wei Dynasty Daoist. He was a disciple of Chen Tuan. After inheriting the secrets of the Dao from Chen Tuan, he went to Zhong Nan Mountain to train for ten years. He taught and wrote "Return to the Original". He lived 99 years.

#### Zhang Zhongjing (150-219)

Eastern Han Dynasty famous doctor. His book "Shang

Han Lun" (On Fevers) is a classic that is still used in medical schools today.

Zhang Ziyang

See Zhang Boduan.

Zhen Ren

A Daoist who overcomes the limits of individuality, and ascends to higher states of being; he becomes an Authentic Man, or Authentic Man.

Zheng Qi (Upright Qi)

In medical terms it is the Qi that combats the outside evil influences such as viruses.

In Qigong terms, it is the overall spiritual state of the practitioner. One who has Zheng Qi should be open-minded and positive.

Zhizhuo

Stubbornly holding onto. In Qigong practice this refers to the phenomenon of people too focused on one aspect and will refuse to come out of it. This is caused by too much mind-intent. This usually causes minor headaches.

Zhong Liquan

Also known as Han Zhongli. One of the Eight Immortals. His Daoist name was "Upright Yang Child". He lived during the Tang Dynasty but was mistakenly thought of as a person of the Han Dynasty because gave himself the phrase "The whole world is dispersed around the Zhongli of Han." He was born a big person and was once a general in the army. During one battle, his side was defeated. In his flight he got lost in the woods at night and ran into Daoist Wang Xuanpu. Wang taught him many secrets of Daoism including the Large Heaven method. He then donned the Daoist robe and started a new life of training in the Zhong Nan Mountains. By chance he found the book of "Ling Bao Jing" (The Book of Treasures) in between stonewalls in the mountain and was enlighten and reached the Large

Heaven of the Dao. He is regarded as the head of the Five Ancestors of the Northern School of Daoism.

#### Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073)

Northern Song Dynasty philosopher. He developed the "Wuji Chart" of Chen Tuan into "Taiji Chart". His works had been quoted by generations succeeding him. Most of the language and theory we ascribe to today in Daoism came from his works, such as the following quote:

Taiji comes out of Wuji. When Taiji moves, yang is created. Extreme movement will lead to tranquility. Tranquility gives rise to yin. Extreme tranquility will give rise to movement again. Movement and tranquility are rooted in each other. The separation of yin and yang will create polarity.

#### Zhou

Number 7 of the 13 postures of Taijiquan. Elbow strike. The power comes from the whole body. The direct contact point is the elbow.

#### Zhuangzi (369-286 B.C)

Ancient philosopher. He was the second most important figure in Daoism. It was he who propounded the doctrines set out by Laozi in his "Dao De Jing". Zhuangzi lived in the state of Song during the Warring States Period of Chinese history. He lived somewhere in today's Henan Province, near the Shaolin Temple area. He was a respected philosopher and civil servant but refused to serve in any governments. In the year of 742, he was posthumously named the Authentic Man of Southern China. This title was reaffirmed by emperors of both Song and Yuan Dynasties.

#### Zishi (Child Time)

The time from 11:00 pm to 1:00am. It is also known as the Lively Child Time (Huo Zishi). It is the end of the yin cycle and the beginning of the yang cycle. According to the theory of the "man following the ways

of the heaven", this is the best time for Qigong practice.

#### Zuqiao (Ancestral Cavity)

Another name for Dantian. Normally it refers to the upper Dantian roughly in between the eyebrows.

#### Zusanli

On the anterior lateral side of the leg, 3 cun below Dubi (ST 35), one finger breadth (middle finger) from the anterior crest of the tibia.



# AFTERWORD

When the idea of this book was formulating in my mind, I thought of writing it in English, but in the style and language<sup>169</sup> Qigong was originally written by the ancient immortals, sages, and masters. One does not play golf in loose fitting silk Taiji uniforms; nor work on a heavy oilrig in a tuxedo. A woman's beauty comes from her dresses and a horse's best performance has to do with his saddle<sup>170</sup>. Indeed, the mystery of Qigong could be described by no other language than the ancient Chinese language in the form of poems and Chengyu<sup>171</sup>. The ancient Chinese language with all the Chengyu and other aspects, convey deep meanings with very few words, a befitting token of Qigong.

As I was writing it, I found that it is almost impossible to use the English language to write a Qigong book. The language is incapable of bringing forth the ideas in Qigong. I hope that I have resolved some of the problems with the language and shed some light on the true nature of Qigong through the employment of a mixture of English and Chinese, in words, and more importantly, in meaning.

The cultural differences are even worse. The difficulties lay in the fact that Daoism and the ideas of the West are two entities like water and fire. They do not mix. There are insurmountable obstacles to overcome to sow the one-grain of seed of Qigong in the fertile soil of the West and

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<sup>169</sup> Here I do not mean language like English and Chinese. I used this word here to mean terminology, or special way of writing of a particular profession.

<sup>170</sup> This is a common Chinese idiom which means certain complimentary items will bring out the best they support.

<sup>171</sup> Chengyu is a form of word group like an English idiom. They are mostly based on historical events. They include a variety of methods in packing large amount of information into a compact short form. Two-part Xiehouyu that plays on homonyms such as 'Monk using an umbrella-No hair and no sky'. A monk has no hair. If he uses an umbrella, there will be no sky. No hair sound the same as no law. No sky means no one is above you. So the meaning of this idiomatic saying is "I am above the law".

to nurture it, to cultivate to, to water it, to fertilize it and to harvest its bumper crop. The cultural soil is too different, the habitat unfamiliar. All are against this fragile one-grain of seed.

As I promote the art of Qigong across the land, I find people with overwhelmingly open hearts and minds. I find a people who are almost totally alien to the ideas I try to share with them, but they are determined to receive it.

Hunyuan Qigong, an art that sprang out of the ruins of Daoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and the ashes of martial arts, will prosper and will continue to serve the people in China as well as in the rest of the world. The formation of this gem took over 60 years. The art is the crystallization of Grandmaster Feng's life. Let this "Elixir"<sup>172</sup> send us on our way to the Great Dao!

Hunyuan Qigong is the embodiment and direct transmission of all the religious and cultural elements of China. It is so rich that it is impossible to give it full attention. This book endeavours to examine Qigong from one aspect of its sources only. That is the influence of Daoism on it.

Daoism is, and has been, a permanent fixture in the Chinese cultural scene. Its origin can be traced back to Huangdi, the legendary tribal chief who is considered the ancestor of the Chinese people and Chinese culture. Huangdi was said to have given birth to Daoist thinking, Chinese language, agriculture and Chinese medicine.

By the time of Lao Zi, the idea of Daoism was already deeply entrenched in the daily lives of people. His work "Dao De Jing" (The Cannon of the Dao and Virtue), with its 5,000 characters, was the culmination of thousands of years of Daoist practice up to that time.

By the middle of Eastern Han Dynasty, Daoism took on another meaning. It was formalized by Zhang Ling to be a formal religion. This newly formed religion revered Laozi as the founder and patron saint. Since then, there have always been two separate strands of Daoism in China: one of

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<sup>172</sup> Figurative usage in this instance.

religion and the other of philosophy. The two are different and yet interwoven in their developments.

Daoism was adopted by many dynasties as the state religion and was thus given great thrust in its propagation. In fact, many immortals were given the title by emperors. The library of Daoist literature, called "Dao Cang" (Taoist Cannons), have guided the development of politics, the economy, philosophy, literature, language, medicine, music, art, pharmaceuticals, life preservation, Qigong, chemistry, geology and astrology over the past several thousand years.

It is safe to say that the cornerstone of the Chinese culture is Daoism.

The main purpose of Daoism is the prolongation of life. Qigong is the primary tool<sup>173</sup> used in this pursuit. The claims about personal cultivation and longevity can be verified through the practice of Qigong. Through advanced Qigong cultivation, a person can reach immortality. In the mind of traditional Chinese people who are indoctrinated by Daoist thinking, this claim is a natural and sound one. But to the scientific minded modern man, it is a different story.

Many attempts have been made in recent history to corroborate the validity of such claims of the ancients. There have been many success stories but by and large, the fundamental claims of ancient Daoist practices and their achievements cannot be proven.

This trend continues today. Too many people have tried to study Daoist based Qigong system with a scientific bias. This book tries to elucidate the readers with original concepts on Daoism. It is my hope that only with such a sound foundation of Daoism, will the practice of Qigong be strong and solid.

This is not to say that science is invalid. Rather, science and the wisdom of Daoism are not parallel. A scientist cannot scientifically quantify Qi as much as a Qigong master cannot prove that science is not logical.

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<sup>173</sup> Qigong is also associated with Buddhism, Confucianism and other Chinese traditions. But overall, the most dominant guiding principle of Qigong is Daoism.

However, this is hope in resolving this discrepancy. When learning and practicing with Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang, all the differences become irrelevant. It is in this kind of personal transmission that the obstacles are eliminated. I urge each person who is interested in the pursuit of good health and Qigong, seek personal instruction from a qualified instructor. After all, a book frozen in the rigid form of words, cannot give details of different dimensions.

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# HISTORY CHART OF CHINA

The Five Emperors (Huang Di, Zhuan Xu, Di Ku, Yao and Shun)			~2600 BC~2100 BC
Xia Dynasty			21-16 Centuries B.C.
Shang Dynasty			16-11 Centuries B.C.
Zhou Dynasty	Western Zhou Dynasty		11 Century B.C.-771 B.C.
	Eastern Zhou Dynasty		770-256 B.C.
	Spring and Autumn Period		770-476 B.C.
	Warring States		475-221 B.C
Qin			221-207 B.C.
Han Dynasty	Western Han Dynasty		206 B.C.-24 A.D.
	Eastern Han Dynasty		25 A.D.-220 A.D.
Three Kingdoms	Wei		220-265
	Shu		221-263
	Wu		222-280
Western Jin Dynasty			265-316
Eastern Jin Dynasty			317-420
Northern and Southern Dynasties	Southern Dynasty	Song	420-479
		Qi	479-502
		Liang	502-557
		Chen	557-589
	Northern Dynasty	Northern Wei	386-534
		Eastern Wei	534-550
	Northern Qi		550-577
	Western Wei		535-556
	Northern Zhou		557-581
Sui Dynasty			581-618
Tang Dynasty			618-907

Five Dynasties	Later Liang	907-923
	Later Tang	923-936
	Later Jin	936-946
	Later Han	947-950
	Later Zhou	951-960
Song Dynasty	Northern Song	960-1127
	Southern Song	1127-1279
Liao Dynasty		916-1125
Jin Dynasty		1115-1234
Yuan Dynasty		1271-1368
Ming Dynasty		1368-1644
Qing Dynasty		1644-1911
Republic of China		1912-
People's Republic of China		1949-

# PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Laoshi  
Teacher, commonly used in China because the modern society frowns upon traditional relationships.
2. Last name + shifu: refers to any student showing respect to a teacher. Does not show relationship.
3. Shibo  
Means master's senior brother.
4. Shidi  
Junior brother
5. Shifu  
Master. Is reserved for master-disciple relationship.
6. Shigong  
Grandmaster, Master's master.
7. Shigu  
Means master's sister
8. Shijie  
Senior sister
9. Shimei  
Junior sister
10. Shimu  
Master's wife
11. Shishu  
Master's junior brother
12. Shixiong  
Means senior brother



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