

DISCOVERING QIGONG

An Introduction to the National Qigong Association

Five Treasures Set of Exercises

The National Qigong Association has developed this Qigong set to introduce the art and science of energetic cultivation to the public. This handout is designed to be used in conjunction with the DVD if available. If not, the illustrations are meant to assist you in practicing these exercises.

Qigong is the skill of cultivating vital energy. Qigong integrates physical postures and breathing techniques with focused intention. There are three major schools of Qigong: Medical, Martial and Spiritual. It's great appeal is that everyone can benefit, regardless of ability, age, and belief systems or life circumstances. For more information, please refer to the "What Is Qigong?" brochure.

FIVE TREASURES PRACTICE SET

This practice set is designed to work with the overall energy of the body. Keep in mind when practicing the moves that they can be modified to fit your individual circumstances. The set should be performed within a comfortable range for each person.

This practice set is divided into three sections: 1) Warm-up (for cleansing), 2) Five Treasures Set (collecting and circulating energy), and 3) Closing (storing energy).

WARMUPS (Cleansing)

- **SHAKE THE TREE**

Begin by relaxing the entire body as you shake loose any tension or tightness. Feel the joints open allowing for the energy channels to open, feeling a release of any blocked energy in the entire body, including the internal organs. Shake and vibrate the body in unison.

- **TWIST FROM THE WAIST, SWING THE ARMS**

This move begins by shifting the body weight left and right while simultaneously twisting the waist. Allow for the arms to swing naturally, tapping gently in the front and back of the waist. Keep the hands in a soft fist. This stimulates the kidney meridians as well as the belt channel in particular, and the energy on the left and right sides of the body.

- **CENTERING POSITION**

This position is done from a relaxed, natural standing posture. Stand with your spine erect and relaxed, feet and knees facing forward with the arms down and the palms facing below the navel. This is a neutral position for centering and grounding and is used to transition between movements as well as beginning and ending a sequence.

FIVE TREASURES SET (collecting and circulating the energy)

- **OCEAN WAVE BREATHING**

Begin from the centering position. Using the image of standing in the ocean, imagine waves coming up gently pushing your hands upward as your entire body rocks gently forward and backward. As you inhale, allow your hands to rise up in front of the body slightly. As you exhale, bring the hands back as the entire body relaxes and sinks. As you continue to inhale and exhale, make the arm motions larger and larger. Breathe slowly and evenly in coordination with the movements. Gradually slow down and return to smaller movements. End in the centering position.

- **DRAW UP EARTH QI**

From the centering position, use the image of scooping up Earth energy, raise up the body stretching the arms and palms towards the heavens, as you inhale. As you exhale, squat slightly, turning the palms down towards the Earth. Focus on the whole body movement, feeling the energy of reaching up and sinking down. Repeat several times, ending in the centering position.

- **GATHERING IN STARLIGHT**

From the centering position, use the image of your energy body expanding in the vastness of the universe and connect with the stars. Simultaneously step out with the right foot while reaching up with the right hand, place the left hand at the middle of the lower back, (opposite the navel) holding five fingertips together at the same point. Begin to circle the right hand towards the heavens, collecting the starlight, as you shift your weight forward and backward. Repeat several times as you bring this energy down first through the head, then the heart, then the abdomen. Focus on gathering the energy and circulating it throughout the body, to nourish your soul. Switch to the left side and repeat. Return to centering position.

- OPEN THE HEART

Begin in centering position. Using the image of gathering energy into the heart, as you inhale reach forward with the arms pulling the energy directly into the heart center of the chest. Relax the body as you repeat several times. Then reverse the direction as you exhale, while reaching forward extending the hands, palms facing upward from the heart as a symbol of giving and sharing. Feel all your emotional and mental obstacles release and let go. Repeat several times.

- DRAW DOWN HEAVEN QI

From centering position, use the image of drawing heaven energy down through the body. As you inhale, reach toward the heavens connecting with the energy above. As you exhale, lower your hands, bringing the heaven qi down through the top of the head into the chest, abdomen, legs and out through the feet. Feel the energy collecting, circulating and illuminating the entire body. Repeat several times.

CLOSING (Storing energy)

STORING AND SMOOTHING THE QI

Begin by using your palm to brush down the inside and outside of the right arm, from shoulder down and off the fingertips. Repeat with left arm. Then brush down the inside and outside and then the front and back, of each leg from hip down off the toes. Then use your palms to brush the energy down the front of the chest, from throat to abdomen. Finally, placing your palms over each other, circle the hands/palms over the abdomen in a clockwise direction a few times, and then a counter clockwise direction. End in centering position. Feel the energy naturally permeate through your entire body. You may hold this position for a few minutes to complete the practice session.

By developing a regular daily routine of correct and consistent practice, one may regain youthful vitality, maintain health, promote longevity and recover from illness. Qigong harmonizes the body, mind and soul connections.

NOTE: The information in this handout and the exercises are intended to be educational in nature and helpful in promoting wellness; however they are not intended as medical care or medical advice or to replace the advice or services of a medical physician. Before undertaking any self-care regimens it is advisable to consult with one's physician, especially pertaining to healthcare needs that require medical diagnosis. The NQA is not responsible for any adverse effects resulting from the practice of these exercises.

Written by the National Qigong Association, curriculum Sub-Committee of Public Education and Outreach, edited and updated by the Healing Wave Committee in November, 2006.

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