

# **Introductory Qigong Class**

*Five Branches University*

*Taught by Dr. Tom Leichardt, DMQ (China)*

## **1) Qigong Introduced**

### **What is Qigong?**

Qigong, which literally translates to "energy skill" or "energy manipulation," is the ancient art and science of working with the subtle energy of earth, heaven, and one's self. Qigong incorporates simple yet profound postures or movements, along with the breath and the focus of one's intention to achieve greater health, vitality, awareness, concentration, balance, tranquility, and stillness of mind.

Along with Acupuncture, Herbs, and Massage/Bodywork, Qigong is considered one of the four branches of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), and has a history going as far back as 5,000 years. There are three varieties, or schools, of Qigong, all of which overlap to varying degrees.

- **Martial Qigong** (Nei Gong) – Focuses on structure and alignment of bones, tendons, ligaments
- **Medical Qigong** – Focuses on health and longevity
- **Spiritual Qigong** (Shen Gong) – Focuses on mind concentration, refinement of one's essence, and the cultivation of virtue.

Medical Qigong includes Internal and External Qigong, and deals primarily with health and wellness. It can have any of the following applications:

- Internal Qigong may be practiced by oneself as preventative health care, increasing one's immune function, emotional health and sense of well being.
- With External Qigong Therapy, a Qigong doctor emits Qi towards the recipient in order to purge, strengthen, and regulate their energetic matrix, addressing specific health issues or for overall health.
- Internal Qigong may also include the prescription of specific exercises to address distinct health conditions, such as insomnia, high blood pressure, etc. and is often used as an adjunct to External Qigong Therapy.

### **Three Regulations of Qigong**

- **Posture** – Utilizing physical movement, including gently stretching the meridians, as well as the alignment and integration of bones, tendons, and ligaments to lead and guide the Qi
- **Breath** – Utilizing breath to lead and guide the Qi
- **Intention** – Utilizing the focus of one's mind intention to lead and guide the Qi

### **Three Treasures and Three Dan Tians**

Qigong brings balance and harmony between the three treasures, corresponding to the three dan tians. These energies are all interdependent in the Post Heaven (physical) existence, therefore their balance and equilibrium is sought. On a deeper level, sincere practice transforms dense physical energy known as Jing into Qi, Qi into Shen, Shen into Void, and finally Void into Tao or Divine. This is a process of spiritual alchemy whereby the base metal (Jing) is transformed into higher and more refined forms until eventually, it is transformed, or merges into, gold (Tao or Divine).

- **Earth – Lower Dan Tian – Jing**
- **Person/Self – Middle Dan Tian – Qi**
- **Heaven – Upper Dan Tian – Shen**

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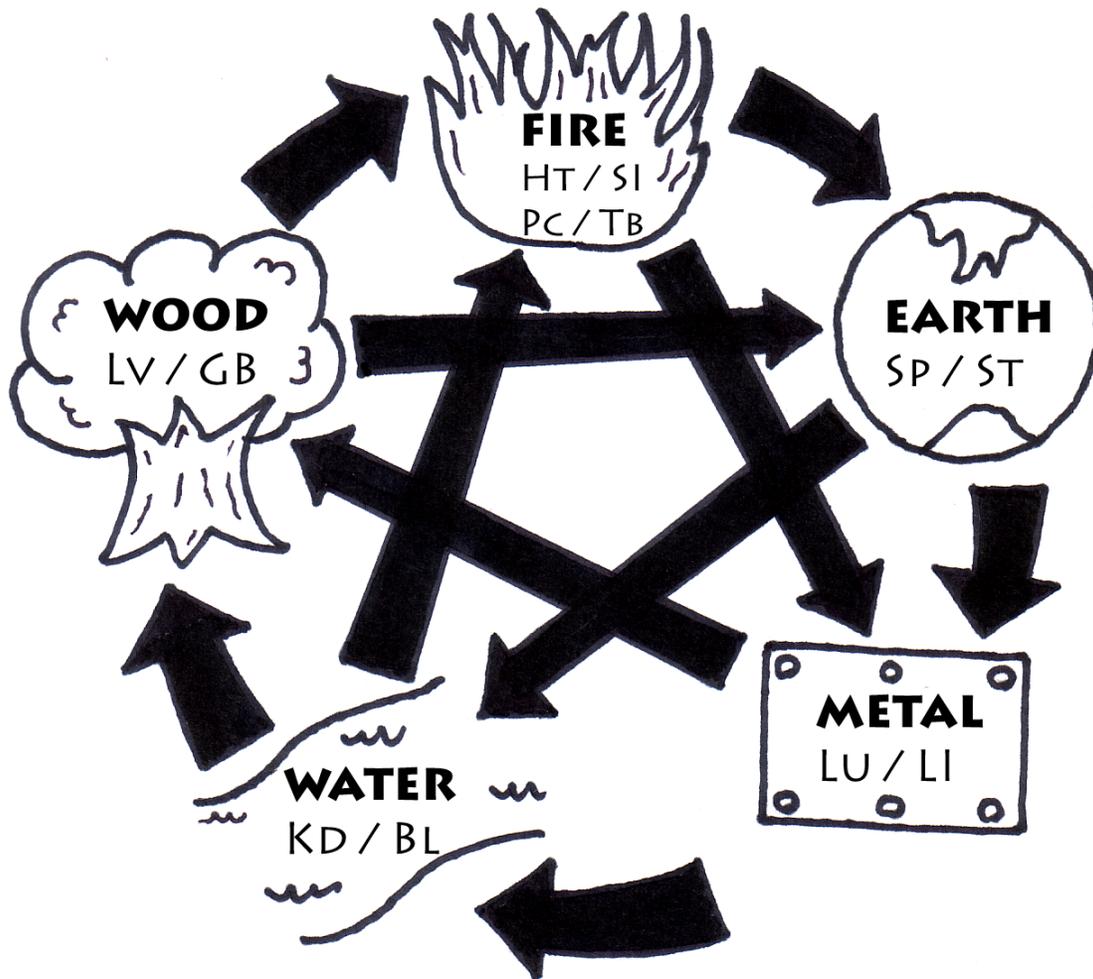
## The Five Phases of Energy (Wu Xing)

Wu Chi is unmanifest and undifferentiated pure energy. As energy moves from unmanifest to manifest, Wu Chi becomes Tai Chi, symbolized by the Yin Yang, which is the perfect union of seeming opposites. These opposites are actually still one, and continually flow and change into each other. Tai Chi further subdivides into the Wu Xing, which are the five phases of energy, or more commonly referred to as the five elements. From the Five Elements come the "Ten Thousand things," referring to the entire creation. The five phases of energy/ five elements are:

**Water – Wood – Fire – Earth – Metal**

The diagram below demonstrates how each element or phase of energy transforms into the next element or phase in the generating cycle, represented by the outer circular arrows. The inner arrows demonstrate the controlling cycle, which helps curb growth to maintain balance.

Figure 1.1: The Five Element Generating and Controlling Cycles



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## Generating and Controlling Cycles

In the beginning, we tend to work with two of the four cycles of energy, which includes the generating and controlling cycle. These cycles were depicted earlier in Figure 1.1.

- **Generating Cycle** – Water creates Wood, Wood creates Fire, Fire creates Earth, Earth creates Metal, Metal creates Water
- **Controlling Cycle** – Water controls Fire, Fire controls Metal, Metal controls Wood, Wood controls Earth, Earth controls Water

Typically, the generating cycle is used to tonify and regulate (such as with the Taoist 5) while the controlling cycle is used for purgation (such as with the Healing Sounds).

## Attributes of the Five Elements

In the course of thousands of years of observation and experimentation, the Chinese discovered that the Five Elements have many qualities, attributes, associations, and relationships. Chinese doctors use this information to find the root causes of energetic and physical disorders, and as a basis for treatment. The table below lists the Five Elements and their attributes.

Figure 1.2: Five Element Table

**Five Element Table**

	<b>Water</b>	<b>Wood</b>	<b>Fire</b>	<b>Earth</b>	<b>Metal</b>
<b>Yin Organ</b>	Kidneys	Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lungs
<b>Yang Organ</b>	Bladder	Gall Bladder	Sm. Intestine	Stomach	Lg. Intestine
<b>Color</b>	Dark Blue, Black	Forest Green	Red, Dark Pink	Golden Yellow	White
<b>Virtue</b>	Wisdom, Gentleness	Kindness, Flexibility	Joy, Love	Centered, Nurturing	Courage, Letting go
<b>Acquired Emotion</b>	Fear, Shock	Anger, Frustration	Overexcited	Worry, Over- thinking	Grief, Sadness
<b>Taste</b>	Salty	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Pungent
<b>Season</b>	Winter	Spring	Summer	Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> mo.	Autumn
<b>Climate</b>	Cold	Wind	Heat	Dampness	Dryness
<b>Tissue</b>	Bones	Tendons, Nerves	Blood Vessels	All Muscles, Fascia	Skin, Hair
<b>Sense Organ</b>	Ears	Eyes	Tongue	Mouth	Nose
<b>Sense</b>	Hearing	Sight	Speech	Taste	Smell
<b>Agent</b>	Zhi	Hun	Shen	Yi	Po
<b>Healing Sound</b>	Yu Descending	Guo Descending	Jang or Ha Flat	Gong or Who Flat	Shang Descending

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## 2) Qigong Exercises

### Wu Chi

(Embodiment of the Void. Beginning standing posture for all exercises.)

- Feet shoulder width apart and parallel to each other
- Distribute weight on the inside and center of the feet
- Knees slightly bent
- Pelvis tucked under, flattening the lower back
- Belly soft and relaxed
- Chest and ribs gently open and expanded
- Round the back
- Shoulders relaxed and fully resting (not elevated)
- Shoulder blades gently expanded, pressing out to opposite walls, causing arms to suspend slightly away from the body, i.e. creating a small space between the arms and torso.
- Chin slightly tucked in
- Crown point gently raised to ceiling, gently stretching cervical spine
- Tongue is to the roof of the mouth (Fire point) and anal sphincter is *slightly* and *gently* closed

You should feel a gentle expansion in the spine as you tuck the pelvis under and gently press your crown to the ceiling. Expand and create space in the joints. Allow yourself relax into the posture. If you choose to stand in the Wu Chi for meditation, follow the sitting meditation instructions to concentrate the mind.

### Pulling Down Heavens

Start from Wu Chi. While you inhale, raise your arms, pointing fingers away from your body. When your arms become parallel with the earth, rotate palms to heaven, and continue raising arms until fingers point to heaven. Exhale lowering arms with palms facing earth until they return to the Lower Dan Tian, then repeat. *This exercise should be done before and after each of the exercises that follow, which helps in the transitions and acts as an energetic 'reset' for the body and mind.*

### Qi Scatter

(Cleanses body of stagnant energy accumulated by stress, tension, etc.)

- **Counter Swing**  
Exhaling, gently twist to one side as one arm swings in front of your body and the other arm swings behind your body. Inhale coming back to Wu Chi. Then exhale twisting to the opposite side, and swinging the opposite arm in the front and back of your body.
- **Dropping the Post**  
Placing feet 1 to 2 inches apart and applying the rules of Wu Chi posture, make small gentle bounces. Work to feel springiness in the feet, and a wave that moves from the earth all the way to the hands, which you first perceive physically and later energetically.
- **Trembling Horse**  
Alternate pushing off from the ground with each foot causing an X pattern in the body (left leg to right shoulder, right leg to left shoulder). You may eventually feel a standing wave in the body, especially in the spine.

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## **Swaying**

(Yang Organs: Urinary Bladder, Gall Bladder, Small Intestine, Stomach, Large Intestine)

From the Wu Chi posture, inhale, bending at the elbow while hands come up and in towards your body, with elbows bent towards the earth, palms facing away from you, and fingers pointing to heaven. Exhale while hands drop. At the end of this motion your fingers point towards the earth, with your palms facing behind you. Repeat.

With each inhale, gather clean energy from the earth up your legs and into your body, and with each exhale, allow the turbid, stagnant, and unclear energy to come out your fingertips and into the earth. You may think of an old water pump that draws water up from a well when pumped. Eventually, there is only clean energy that flows from the earth through your body and out your fingertips as you clear away all the turbid, stagnant, and unclear energy.

## **Microcosmic Orbit**

(Regulates Qi, Connects and harmonizes the 12 terrestrial branches)

Shake hands so that qi flows to your palms. Bring palms close together until energy is felt. Place palms facing up, with fingers pointing towards each other but not touching, at Lower Dan Tian area. Allow your hands, with palms facing up, to come up to the top of your chest while inhaling. Then gently rotate palms to face towards the earth, with fingers still pointing at each other. While exhaling, bring your palms back down to Lower Dan Tian area. Then, rotate palms to heaven again and repeat. With imagination, your breath, and your palms, guide qi up your back (Governing Channel, Du Mai) as steam and down your front (Conception Vessel, Ren Mai) as water.

## **Taoist 5**

(Opens and dilates the meridians affecting the 5 Yin Organs / 5 elements)

- **Kidney**

(Element: Water, Color: Bark Blue, Virtue: Wisdom, Acquired Emotion: Fear, Shock)

Taking a wider stance, left hand goes behind touching the right Kidney, right hand in front at navel level, with palm pointing to heaven. While exhaling, gently bend down to the ground as if making a scooping motion with the right hand. You can imagine it dipping into water. While inhaling, come back up rotating the right palm to earth, bringing it all the way up to chest level. Repeat the motion. This exercise should also be done with the right hand touching the left Kidney, and the left hand in front with palm pointing to heaven. Remember to inhale as you come up and exhale as you come down.

- **Liver**

(Element: Wood, Color: Forest Green, Virtue: Kindness, Acquired Emotion: Anger)

Hands will push forward and pull back in an alternating pattern. Exhale as each hand is fully extended and inhale while hands are alternating.

- **Heart**

(Element: Fire, Color: Red or Dark Pink, Virtue: Love, Acquired Emotion: Over-excitation)

Begin by holding the energetic ball with the right hand at chest level, palm facing earth, and the left hand at navel with palm facing heaven. The right hand drops from chest level to navel and then presses out to the left side. At the same time the left hand at the navel rotates out to the left side and elevates to chest level. Both palms face away from the body. Return to holding energetic ball position, this time with the right hand at the navel and the left hand at chest level, palms facing each other. Repeat with the left hand dropping to the navel and then pushing out to the right side, while the right hand at the navel rotates out to the right side and elevates to chest level. Exhale while hands rotate and push away from the body. Inhale while hands return towards the body into holding the energetic ball position.

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- **Spleen**  
(Element: Earth, Color: Golden Yellow, Virtue: Centeredness, Acquired Emotion: Worry, Over-thinking)  
Raise hands to forehead touching the tips of thumbs and index fingers, making an opening. Gently twist to the right while exhaling. Return to center while inhaling. Twist to the left while exhaling.
- **Lungs**  
(Element: Metal, Color: White, Virtue: Courage, Acquired Emotion: Sadness, Grief)  
Arms are stretched out in front with palms facing earth. With inhalation, open arms to right and left. Rotate palms to heaven, and while exhaling, bring the arms back out in front of the body.

## **Ascend the Yin and Descend the Yang**

(Regulates Qi, Returns awareness to the body)

Start at the feet inhaling with palms ascending up the yin channels (inside of the leg) then exhale with palms descending down the yang channels (outside of the leg).

## **Point Clearing**

- **LI 4** (Between thumb and index finger: Clears Heat, Cold, Wind, and pathogenic Qi from the Lungs)
- **PC 6** (Base of wrist: Regulates and Tonifies Heart, calms the spirit)
- **LI 11** (Elbow crease: Clears Heat, Wind, and pathogenic Qi from the Lungs)
- **Ht 1** (Under armpit: Regulates Heart)
- **GB 21** (Base of neck at shoulder: Clears Heat, Cold, Wind, redirects rebellious Qi down)
- Clearing down the Conception Vessel (Ren Mai) and around the Belt Channel
- Knocking on the Kidneys, Ming Men (Gate of Life), and then GB 31 (Buttocks)
- Clapping down the outside of you leg (Yang channels) and then up the inside of your leg (Yin channels)
- Rubbing Belly with the flow of digestion

To finish, you may pull down heavens as many times as you like. With the last pull down, stop at your Lower Dan Tian to collect and store the energy there, as described in Returning and Storing the Qi in the Lower Dan Tian.

## **Returning and Storing the Qi in the Lower Dan Tian**

Face palms towards the body and rest them on your Lower Dan Tian. Specifically, align Lao Gong (PC 8) of each palm directly over Chi Hai (Ren or CV 6) for returning and storing the Qi in the Lower Dan Tian. Hold these points together while standing in Wu Chi, breathing into the lower abdomen, and focusing the mind there. This helps return the Qi and is very important after practice, so as not to dissipate the benefits of practice, and to root the consciousness back into the body.

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## **What is Qigong Alchemy?**

Qigong Alchemy is Tom's service to the community conveying ancient wisdom for the betterment of people's lives. This includes classes, workshops, and retreats in Qigong and Meditation, as well as Medical Qigong treatments and private instruction.

Drawing on the ancient wisdom of traditions he sincerely practiced and cultivated for many years gives Tom exceptional skills in leading, guiding, and helping people individually or in a classroom setting.

With unwavering dedication and commitment, Tom refined his Medical Qigong skills and practice to a high degree of proficiency, while his deep connection with Sri Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma) continually opens his heart to serve the highest good of each individual as well as the community.

## **About Dr. Tom Leichardt**

Tom Leichardt graduated with a Doctorate of Medical Qigong (DMQ) from the International Institute of Medical Qigong, the oversees college of Henan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (China).

Additionally, Tom received lineage into the Dragon Gate sect of Taoism at Mt. Chingcheng in China, where he was given his Taoist name Li Zhong. Li means fire, while Zhong indicates center.

Tom also received Mantra Initiation from Sri Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma), as well as his spiritual name Yogeshwar. Tom serves Amma on staff during some of Her tours and participates in other humanitarian activities.

Tom integrates both of these traditions into a beautiful expression of service to his community in the form of classes, workshops, treatments, and private instruction.

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