

USA IN KENNET COFFEE EXCHANGE 29th JUNE 2023

QIGONG – FELICITY SIMPSON

Hello, I'm Felicity Simpson and I want to introduce you to the ancient Chinese practise of Qigong (pronounced chee gung

I first came across Qigong in 2011 in Costa Rica, where it was taught as a free part of the retreat programme that I was attending . Qigong, I learned is an ancient Chinese wellness practice, used in hospitals for pre and postoperative care in mainstream Chinese medicine, and practised by millions in the parks and green spaces of China before the start of the working day.

I was struck by how challenging I found the practice despite it seeming to be so “gentle and easy” but what really held my interest was the wideness of the application to men and women, young and not so young, and whatever level of fitness the individual had. If you can still breathe you can practice Qigong even lying or sitting down to improve the quality of your physical stamina and the calmness and stability of your mind.

I was a practising clinical psychologist at the time for the NHS with long lists of patients waiting to be seen and no help available without being able to be seen by a fee charging specialist. Especially attractive was the no cost, no equipment necessary and no special location needed aspect of Qigong. Qigong was not widely known in the UK at this time due mainly to the fact that there is inherently no money to be made from an ancient body of knowledge which while not widely known in the West is nonetheless a free health resource which everyone should have access to.

Although the ‘**Healing Power of Qigong**’ manual was written in 2014, my own practise only became daily when I reached the age of 60, when injuries became more common from trying to play tennis to the same standard achieved in earlier years. Qigong incidentally when practised correctly builds bone density; another major reason for its importance for seniors. Another very important advantage is the fact that Qigong was originally developed to cultivate balance. A widespread anxiety about falling in the senior population can be successfully addressed by this practise. The first part of the day is especially desirable to practice because of the way in which you can move into your day feeling relaxed energised and positive. To improve the quality and duration of sleep practice the more soothing “ flowing motion” movements at the end of the day are an optimal choice.

Let's turn now to some history and prevailing attitudes toward advancing age that make Qigong the treatment of choice for seniors.

The Two Kinds of Medicine

In the West, traditionally, we have had only one kind of medicine– the treatment of disease. Unfortunately, in our culture we wait until we are sick and need to be cured before we think about medical treatment. Our Western medical heritage has historically taught us very little about using personal methods of disease prevention, health enhancement or fulfilling our self potential. In fact until recently, in Western medicine, even prevention has usually been characterised by clinical procedures like –immunisation, mammography, etc. that are used to fight or screen for disease. In the Chinese approach a key aspect of prevention is accomplished by enhancing general health by paying attention to nutrition, the practise of meditation, Qigong, breathing exercises and self applied massage.

Most ancient cultures have a strong tradition of prevention. For example Native Americans talk about “big medicine” referring to an individual’s personal capacity, strength or power. While “big medicine” can be focused on disease curing, its primary focus is the enhancement of inner potential for daily life and for enhancing intuition. In China this kind of personal radiance and stamina – “big medicine” would be called big Qi. It is the obvious presence of individual energy and life force– a robust feeling of personal power. In Chinese culture from the very beginning, the concept of utilising medicine for longevity and personal optimisation has held equal weight with the use of medicine for the treatment of disease. Practices such as acupuncture and herbal medicine are used equally for preventive healthcare as well as for disease treatment.

Our modern healthcare system has encouraged the handing over of our own health to “experts” in the medical field. From approximately the middle of the 19th century (but really beginning with Descartes in the 16th century and his dualism philosophy) medicine became split between mental and physical illness giving birth to modern psychiatry as a separate discipline to general medicine. The problem with this approach is the mind and the body are indivisible. A sick mind quickly leads to a breakdown of physical health and the reverse is also true. The ‘shamanic’ systems (which simply means the ancient ways of treating sickness before the era of modern medicine) didn’t make this division; their approach is holistic which is still practised in Ayurvedic (Indian) and Chinese medicine today and indeed this approach is a characteristic of premodern medicine right around the world

Qigong is a healthcare approach that not only strengthens the body but produces mental calmness and clarity and a stronger connection to the soul and nature. Western medicine also now accepts that lifestyle factors are one of the biggest determinants of individual health. By “lifestyle” we mean the food

that we eat should in the main be cooked by ourselves (as opposed to being prepared by a supermarket) with fresh simple ingredients; getting adequate sleep 7 - 9 hours a night (depending on the needs of the individual) and taking exercise of a kind which promotes strength, flexibility and vitality in accordance with the individual's level of fitness. The Chinese approach is the opposite of the western mantra 'no pain no gain' pumping iron type of mentality; thank goodness! if like me you don't have a gym membership!! Qigong movements are slow graceful and deliberate and must be combined with focused intentional breathing.

"Roger Jahnke is a wise teacher and healer. Here he introduces the healing power of [Tai Chi and] Qigong—a simple yet profound method of achieving wellness of the body and mind." —DEEPAK CHOPRA

The
Healing Promise
of *Qi*



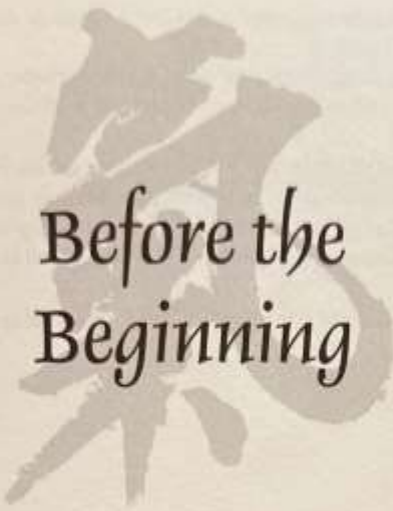
Creating Extraordinary Wellness
Through Qigong and Tai Chi

Roger Jahnke, O.M.D.

The Healing Promise Of Qigong is 2002. It is available only in Hardcover for £18.30 from Amazon

It is a fully detailed but easily readable account of Roger's time in China, the philosophy behind Qigong practise and many personal healing stories from practitioners and Chinese masters.

A very enjoyable read and comprehensive introduction to Qigong practise.



Before the Beginning

Before we begin, it is inspiring to know that healing and empowerment in the ancient traditions that honor Qi (Chi) are rooted in nature and the cycles of the seasons; the rising and setting of the sun, moon, and stars; and fire and water in their multiple manifestations. Qi infuses all of life—humans, plants, and the transformation of the caterpillar into the butterfly.

The extraordinary concepts and methods you are about to explore have origins so ancient that there is no written history of the first several thousand years of their development and use.

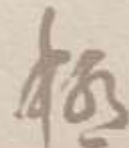
The practical act of cultivating the Qi for healing and healthy life is deeply rooted in the very nature of the earth and the immense universe in which it spins. When people cultivate Qi through Qigong (Chi Kung) and Tai Chi (Taiji), they are purposefully accessing and then circulating natural healing resources in such a provocative way that contemporary science has only begun to explain it.

What you are about to learn and practice is a technology so profound yet so practical that its arrival in our culture could easily go down in history as one of the primary medical breakthroughs of the new millennium.

It is valuable to know in advance that this immersion into the cultivation of Qi may often seem fantastic and even paradoxical. Qi is not only energy but also the quintessential foundation of the universe. Qigong is not really just an exercise; it can become a powerful way of being. Tai Chi is much more than a martial art; it can actually be defined as a method of accessing and sustaining harmony with the universe.



Tai



Chi



THE HEALER WITHIN

Using Traditional Chinese Techniques
to Release Your Body's Own Medicine

Movement

Massage

Meditation

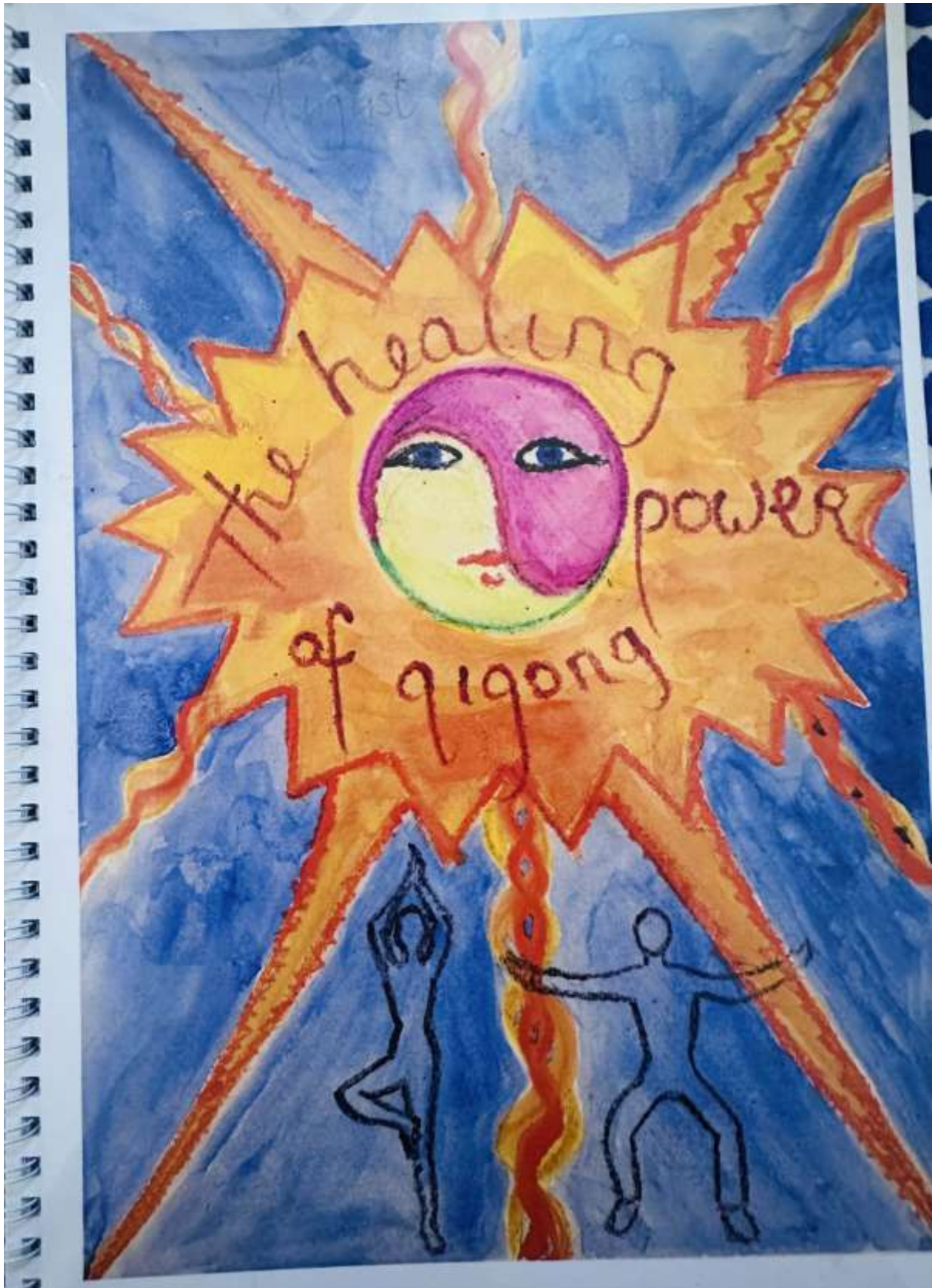
Breathing

ROGER JAHNKE

Doctor of Oriental Medicine

Inspired by Chinese medicine's central concept – that the most profound medicine is produced within us – *The Healer Within* offers simple, effective methods for releasing our natural powers for healing, endurance, vitality and longevity.

Roger Jahnke, doctor of oriental medicine, translates ancient healing practices of Qigong (Chi Kung) for contemporary readers. *The Healer Within* combines four simple techniques – gentle stretching, breathing exercises, self-applied massage, and meditation – to release the body's self-healing powers. The practices are adaptable to any lifestyle and can be done in as little as 15 minutes a day. With applications for specific ailments such as high blood pressure, chronic back pain, cancer and arthritis, this empowering, hands-on guide offers us the power to improve our health and stay well, without costly drugs, equipment, or health-care experts.



Description of the “Healing Power of Qigong manual”

This manual was produced in 2014 and is a basic introduction to Qigong practise. It depicts and describes 3 basic Qigong movements: “Flowing Motion”, (not included in the 29th of June demonstration) “Reaching Up and Stretching Outwards” and “Forward and Back Bending of The Spine” from the sitting position. It also covers self applied massage techniques, breathing and meditation exercises with professional photos from the ancient site of Avebury. This manual is available to purchase for £5.00 from Felicity Simpson:
felicity.simpson@gmail.com