

Qigong Secrets

Secrets of the Ancient Energy Masters - 22 Week Home Study Course

Week Fifteen

Divine Crane Starts Dancing

This weeks pattern is introduced. Brilliant for channeling Qi to the legs, helping to overcome kidney stones and improving the intellect.

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Form

Here are the written instructions for the form. Make sure you watch the video as well! Much easier.

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A Picture Paints A 1000 Words...

Visual instructions for practicing this weeks pattern

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Trouble Shooting Guide...

Problems with your practice? Look no further than this lessons trouble shooting guide to some of the most common mistakes student make with their practice

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Extract From My Personal E-mail

Learn from my experience of not getting the benefits from Qigong...



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Homework & Coming Up Next Week....

Whatever you do, make sure you complete your progress tracker!!

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Welcome!



Welcome to week 15 of the home study course.

This weeks pattern: Divine Crane Starts Dancing gets an 8 on the TOM scale because it is quite a physically demanding pattern. It is brilliant for channeling energy to the legs, helping to overcome



It's easy to make small mistakes when you're practicing without the guidance of a teacher check this lessons trouble shooting guide to avoid making some of the most common.

Kidney stones and for improving the intellect.

This is one of those patterns that will probably take you a bit longer to get the hang of than most, but it is worth the investment. This was probably the one pattern that I had the most difficulty learning when I

first started practicing the 18 Lohan Hands 10 years ago.

We'll also be looking at some of the most common issues that new students encounter that prevent them from getting the most from their practice.

This trouble shooting guide will help you to iron out any creases in your practice.

I've also included a copy of an e-mail I sent to my teacher in 2002, the reply to which will also give your reasons as to why your practice may not be as brilliant as you had hoped.

Let's get started....

Divine Crane Starts Dancing

仙鶴起舞

Chinese: Xian He Qi Wu



Also Known As: Dancing Crane

At A Glance:

Channels Energy to the Legs
Overcomes Kidney Stones
Overcomes Dull Intellect





Form “Divine Crane Starts Dancing”:

1. Start from Wuji stance (fig. 1).
2. Raise your arms parallel to the floor and step your right leg out, so your feet are 3-4 shoulder widths apart (fig. 2). Make certain your feet are parallel to each other.
3. Bend your right knee and keep your left leg straight, turn your head to look at your left hand (fig. 3)
4. Straighten your right knee and turn your head back to the centre, looking forward (fig. 2).
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4, 5-10 times
6. Then change sides and repeat for another 5-10 times bending your left knee (figs. 4 and 5).
7. Bring Chi to the Dan Tian - open your arms wide as if you are about to give the world a hug (fig. 6).
8. Lean forward slightly at the waist and move your arms as if scooping up handfuls of water (fig. 6).
9. Jump up, bringing both feet together, turn your palms over to face the floor and lower down the front of your body (figs. 7 and 8).
10. End (fig 9.).

Divine Crane Starts Dancing

仙鶴起舞

Chinese: Xian He Qi Wu



fig.1



fig.2



fig.3



fig.3a



fig.4



fig.5



fig.6



fig.7



fig.8



fig.9



Important Notes:

- As always, operate within the current boundaries of your body's capabilities. Only lower yourself as much as you are comfortably able. There are no prizes for how low you can go. Remember the Form is not the Art. With daily practise you will naturally be able to lower yourself gradually further and further. Take your time, there is no rush.
- Make certain to keep your upper body upright; do not lean forwards or backwards (see fig. 3a).
- Keep your feet parallel to each other and keep both feet flat on the floor and make sure you do the same number of repetitions on the right and the left legs.

Breathing

1. Breathe in through your nose as you raise your arms and step out (fig. 2).
2. Breathe out gently through your mouth when you lower your body (figs. 3 and 5).
3. Breathe in gently through your nose as you return to the start position (figs. 2 and 4).
4. Bring Qi to the Dan Tian - breathe out gently through your mouth as you lean forward and scoop up water (fig. 6).
5. Breathe in gently through your nose as you jump up (fig. 7).
6. Breathe out gently through your mouth as you lower your hands (fig. 8).



Why you may choose to practise Divine Crane Starts Dancing

This is another exercise from the “Art of Flexible Legs” used by Shaolin Kung Fu students to promote flexibility in the legs. When performed as chi kung it helps to channel energy to the legs and opens up the side meridians of the body. Because of the meridian network this helps to relieve problems in other parts of the body and increases longevity.

This is one of the very clever aspects of working with the body’s meridians. If a patient has an illness or discomfort in a private area of their body, a Chinese Medicine practitioner can use distant points on the meridian to cause a beneficial affect on the personal area in question. Of course, practising high level Qigong can be even better because we are generating a flow of energy that does the healing work for us. In the past Qigong healing was the preferred choice of Emperors. Now you can benefit from it too!

Quotes from students about this pattern

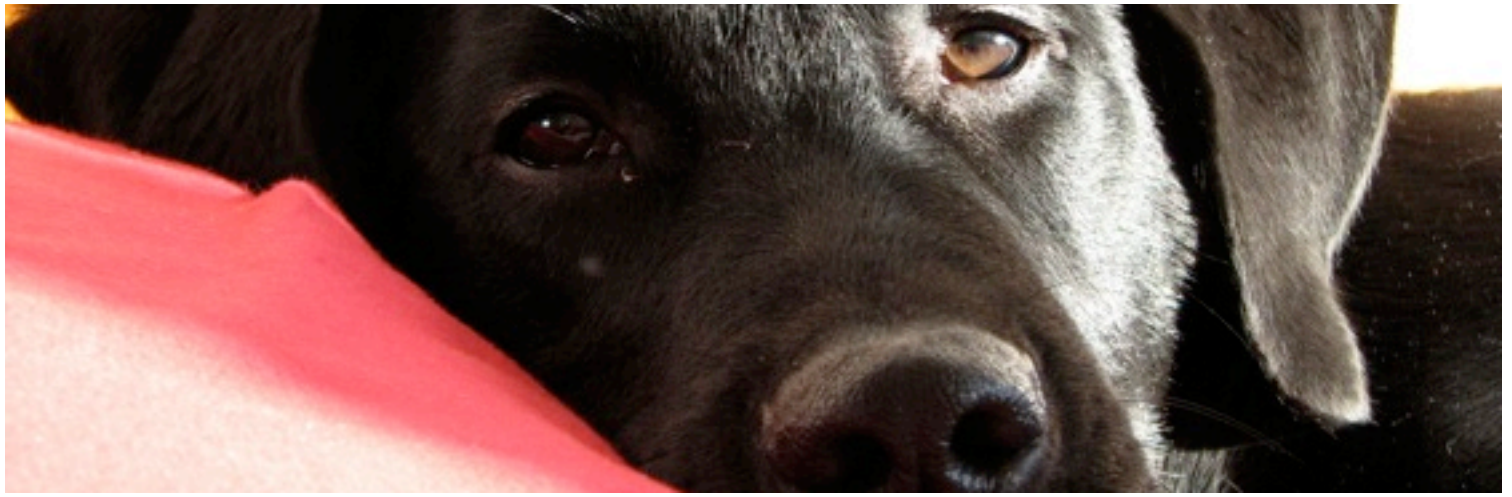
“I had problems with it when I started out. I could hardly stretch enough to do it properly, and I wobbled a lot. I kept practising and progressed gradually. Over time I loosened up and could complete the pattern properly. But it was still a lot of effort because my legs would strain when I had to rise up. As I learned to relax this got better, but I still had the effort in the back of my mind. Then one day I was doing Dancing Crane when a wonderful feeling of peace washed over me and the doubt in myself disappeared. The peaceful feeling kept happening and still does.” – Chris, England.

Extra note:

I remember when I first learned Divine Crane I used to find it quite an awkward pattern to perform properly. Paying attention to my feet proved to be the solution. How?

When standing in fig 2, I would move my attention to my feet and as I lowered my body and raised it, I would make certain to keep the weight as evenly distributed along the whole of my weight bearing foot. By making sure that all of my weight was not being supported on the outside or the ball of my foot I found I could perform the exercise correctly. Gradually as I continued my practise I was able to go lower and lower, but at the start my upper body didn’t go down far at all.

Whilst the Form may be the least important part of high level Qigong, it is still important. Remember not to sacrifice good form, just to try and go lower. It’s a false investment.



Trouble Shooting

Practicing Shaolin Qigong is safer (and much more fun) than crossing the road. However, problems can develop, or, “deviations in practice” as we call them. Here is a short list of some of the most common problems that beginners encounter along with their solutions. If all else fails, stop your practice and seek out a competent Shaolin Qigong instructor or Master.

Problem	Pain or Discomfort
Solution	<p>Check your posture at the location of the pain or discomfort. Energy blockages easily get located in areas of the body with poor posture. Improve your posture and the problem will quickly go away.</p> <p>If you feel ‘sore’ the day after the first time you practiced a pattern, this is a sign that you over did it. Turn it down a notch and build up gradually. Qigong is not physical exercise!</p>
Problem	Physical Tiredness/Muscular Tension
Solution	<p>Make certain all of your physical movements are relaxed and gentle. No muscular strength is required in Qigong and yet the effects can be very forceful.</p>
Problem	Dry Mouth or Feelings of Thirst
Solution	<p>It is likely that your breathing is too forceful. Make sure your breathing is relaxed and gentle</p>
Problem	Headache or Giddiness
Solution	<p>At the beginning stage of your practice breathing out is more important than breathing in. Because when you breathe in you are inhaling Qi and when you breathe out you are exhaling negative Qi from your body. So, make sure you are practicing in a clean and fresh environment.</p> <p>Make sure you are breathing OUT through your mouth and not your nose when you are practicing.</p>



Problem	Inattention, Headache, Giddiness
Solution	Another likely cause is mental stress. Once you have practiced your chosen form and are confident you know all the moves, do not worry about whether you are doing it correctly. Minor mistakes are okay. Relax, Smile from your heart and enjoy your practice.

Problem	Nervousness, Headaches, Inattention
Solution	Make sure your mind is free from distracting thoughts whilst you practice. If something happened in your day to upset you it is better to wait until you are balanced again before practicing. As your practice deepens you will become more resilient against emotional upsets (anger, worry, fear, anxiety etc). But in the beginning it is better to practice when your emotions are at peace.

Problem	Nothing seems to be happening
Solution	<p>Assuming you have been practicing daily for 4 weeks or longer and you have noticed no benefits then:</p> <p>Start by checking your form is correct. Form is the least important aspect of your practice, but it is still important. So make sure you are doing it properly.</p> <p>If your form is correct check that your breathing is relaxed and gentle.</p> <p>If your form is correct and your breathing is relaxed and gentle, check that your mind is relaxed. Make sure you are not worrying about whether your form is correct, or what you're going to have for tea, or what you're going to do about that bill that came in the post today.</p> <p>If your form is correct, your breathing is relaxed and gentle and your mind is calm then please refer back to lesson 14's theory on 'How To Live For 120 Years'.</p>



My Personal Experience With Qigong Practice

Here is an extract from an e-mail I sent to my teacher on the 29th September 2002 about my practice:

...I have been reviewing my aims and objectives with regards my Qigong practice. I have been practicing regularly since I first learned from you in August 2000 (Sergovia, Spain). Two years, several courses in Edinburgh, one in Bath and a Qigong Intensive in Malaysia later I find myself very disappointed with my results.

I still have to use my Ventolin inhaler for my asthma, I still get hay fever and sneezing fits every morning, I am prone to periods of deep sadness and I regularly feel fearful when on my own in a busy place. I also find it difficult to get to sleep and generally wake up in a morning feeling more tired than when I went to bed. In short after 2 years of regular Qigong practice I am not even healthy. What am I doing wrong?

And this is part of the reply:

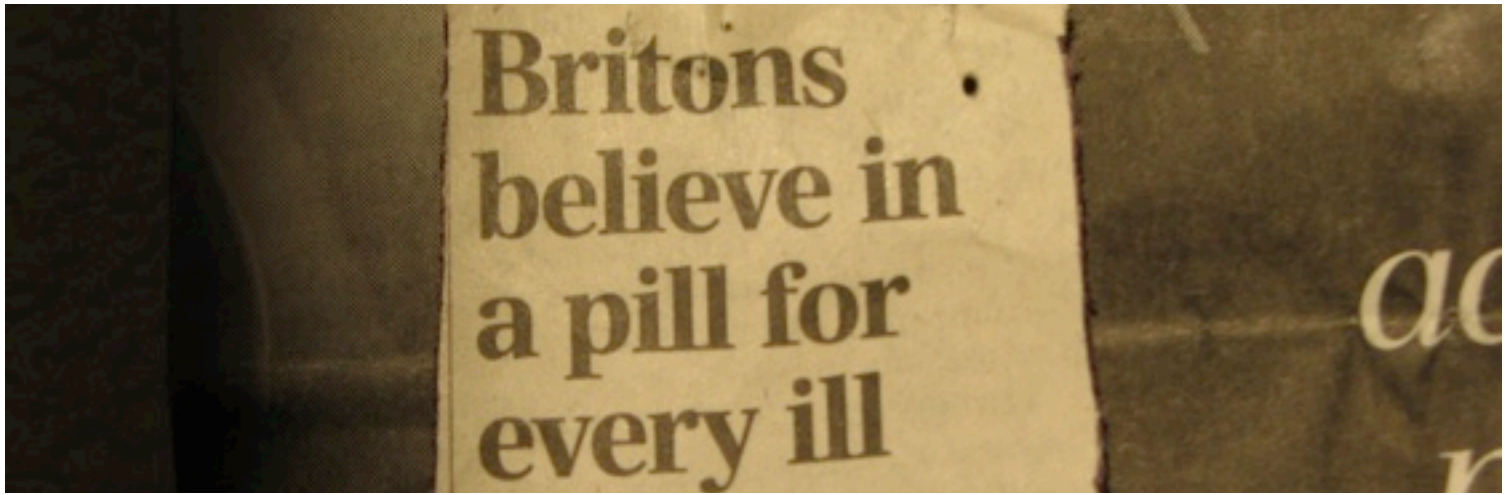
I am quite surprised that you still have your health problems. Nevertheless, this sometimes happens, even to the best of students. The following are some of the possible reasons:

- 1. You have been practicing incorrectly.*
- 2. The benefits from your practice are negated by other factors like unhealthy life style and strong negative emotions.*
- 3. The benefits are negated by bad environmental energy or feng shui.*
- 4. The Qi derived from your practice is working on some other more serious problems unknown to you.*

It is unlikely that you are practicing incorrectly. I saw your practice and it was good.

Check if there are unhealthy life style or strong negative emotions hindering your progress.

Bad environmental energy or bad feng shui is sometimes the cause. Are there any power lines, generators, huge water containers, cemeteries, hospitals or rubbish dumps nearby. Paradoxically staying near a church, temple or other place of worship is unfavourable, because ghosts and other lesser spirits tend to gather around these places.



It is very important that your house should not directly face a road-junction or a pointed object. Are there any rivers or roads cutting into your compound at an angle?

I think the cause is most likely you Qi working on some urgent health problems that you may not be aware of. While they are a nuisance, asthma, hayfever and sneezing fits are comparatively not serious, though they may be symptoms of some more serious hidden problems. The wonderful thing about Qigong is that Qi will work on your most serious problems first, although you may not be consciously aware of these more serious hidden problems. When the serious problems are overcome, and this may take some time as they are deep-rooted, your symptoms will disappear.

If you find it hard to sleep, lie in bed and perform "Lifting the Sky" with your eyes closed. You will find this method excellent for getting you to sleep. Go to bed early and wake up early and you will feel fresh.

Keep up with your Qigong practice. As you practice, do not think of any benefits or of your health problems. Just enjoy your Qigong exercises.

There is some really priceless advice contained in this reply. Read it well. The bit that really helped me to transform my practice into one that really started to give great results was right at the end: *As you practice, do not think of any benefits, or your health problems. Just enjoy your Qigong exercises.* I used to worry a lot during my practice, I used to take it too seriously and as a consequence my results were poor. Learn from my experience, really enjoy your practice and don't take it too seriously.

Oh, and in case you are wondering this is how Wikipedia describes what Feng Shui is: *"an ancient Chinese system of aesthetics believed to use the laws of both Heaven and Earth to help one improve life by receiving positive Qi"* - so now you know!



Homework

1. Complete your progress tracker for Week 14
2. Last lesson you were practicing Three Levels to Ground when you came to the F (form) in PERFECT. This week substitute with Divine Crane Starts Dancing. **Remember:** We don't learn Qigong, we practice Qigong so practice preferably twice a day, once in the morning and once in the evening. But at least once a day.
3. Review your practice and see if you can benefit from any of the points raised in the trouble shooting section or the contents of the private e-mail I sent to my teacher.

Coming Up Next Week....

Next week we'll be learning and practicing the pattern called Second Son Carrying Carrying Mountains. This is perhaps the easiest pattern of the 18 Lohan Hands and gets a 2 on the TOM scale.

This pattern is excellent for overcoming chronic back pain, developing powerful arms for marital artists and stimulates 4 of the 8 wondrous meridians.

We'll also discover the 3 requirements for success in any endeavour! Another big claim, lets see how well I do in 7.

See you next lesson.

Marcus James Santer

