

Qigong15

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

Week One

How the program works..

This home study course is structured to help you get the most from Qigong, quickly and easily.

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Butterfly Dancing In Front Of Flowers

One of the simplest and one of the best Qigong patterns for overcoming stress, worry and depression...

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Consolidate your understanding of the material covered so far and discover what is in store for your next lesson.

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Welcome!



I'd like to welcome you to the first week of the Secrets of the Ancient Energy Masters Home Study Course.

This course was created because of a 'poll' I conducted a few years back whilst learning the dark arts of marketing.



Qigong is the best kept health and vitality secret and now you can discover it for yourself with this home study course.

I had the opportunity to ask over 100 entrepreneurs from a very wide range of business ventures to raise their hands if they had heard of Yoga. Every single hand went up, next I asked them to raise their hand if they had heard of Tai Chi, about 95 hands went

up. Finally I did the same for Qigong. Only 4 hands up!

This feedback confirmed what I already knew intuitively to be true. That hardly anybody has heard of Qigong. And that surprises me due to the fact that it is much easier to learn than Tai Chi, far less strenuous than Yoga and in my experience of teaching Qigong to students, it gives better physical, emotional, mental and spiritual results.

Hence this course. Ultimately I want you to learn Qigong directly from me but first I need to educate you. So you know what Qigong is and what it isn't and encourage you to want to practice. Let's get started...



How The Program Works...

How The Program Works...

Each week you will receive the following components:

- **Health Secrets of the Ancient Energy Masters** - you can think of this as the theory part of the course. Theory is important as it will underpin your understanding of the how and why Qigong works, what makes the difference between high level Qigong and low level Qigong and help you to have certainty that if you practice correctly you will get results.
- **Health Techniques of the Ancient Energy Masters** - think of this as the techniques, skills and exercises I'll be teaching you.
- **Tools** - most weeks I'll be introducing you to specific tools, based on my experience of teaching Qigong to students, that will help you to get the best results possible from this material. I have discovered some really powerful tools that when used give you better results in a shorter time and with less effort. Sounds pretty good right?
- **Summery and Homework** - I have done a *LOT* of courses and I have learned from my own direct experience that I am more likely to understand, retain and succeed with the material I've learned if I am given a summery or a review of what was covered so I can see the 'big picture'. I also know that by doing my homework I help to increase my understanding. Don't worry though if the thought of homework feels unpleasant. I promise you the homework on this course will be fun, enjoyable and beneficial.
- **Coming Next Week** - this components aim is to whet your appetite and give you some idea of what you'll be covering next.



Health Secrets Of The Ancient Energy Masters - Part One

What is Qigong?

A literal interpretation of Qigong is:

Qi = Energy

qong = Work

So Qigong means energy work. Chinese is an incredibly complex language and on my book shelf I have a book titled 'A brief history of Qi' - it's 187 pages long. So there is a lot more to what Qigong is, but for our purposes, energy work is ideal.

Think of Qi as another way of saying 'vital energy'. It is vital energy that keeps you and me alive, that keeps all the functions of our bodies working and Qigong is a powerful way of working on your vital energy.

Qigong is the oldest of the 5 main branches of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). The others being:

- **Accupuncture** - placing needles into specific points on the body to work on vital energy.
- **Tui Na** - a strong therapeutic massage that works on the flow of vital energy.
- **Herbs** - based on their diagnosis a highly qualified TCM physician will prescribe a mixture of herbs to work on the bodies vital energy.
- **Diet** - similar to herbs and far more complex that what we in the West think of as a diet!

Qigong promotes health, vitality and longevity by means of gentle movements combined with correct breathing performed in a meditative state of mind to work on the physical form, energy and mind of a person. There are hundreds of different Qigong schools and thousands of different Qigong exercises.



Different Levels of Qigong

Not all Qigong is the same and I would like to make the following distinctions:

- **Low Level Qigong** – It is unfortunate that many Qigong practitioners today only practice at the level of Form. In truth this is not Qigong at all, but Qigong Form. From my own experience I find this level of Qigong to be of less health benefit than conventional Western activities like walking, running or swimming. It may provide relaxation, gentle exercise by stretching the muscles and promoting blood flow but the effects are unlikely to be strong enough to overcome illness.
- **Middle Level Qigong** – At this level the Qigong practitioner seeks to actively influence their flow of energy. Usually to increase the flow or to remove blockages. At this level the effects on health are superior to those of conventional Western exercise. Many illnesses can be overcome and avoided altogether by practicing at this level.
- **High Level Qigong** – At this level the practitioner works on the three treasures of a human: Form, Energy and Mind. By attaining a Qigong State of Mind (we'll look at this in great detail in week 5's material) the practitioner can actively influence energy. For example tapping energy from the Cosmos and directing it to any part of the body. At this level it simply is not possible to compare the benefits of Western exercise with those of Qigong.

High level Qigong is virtually impossible to learn from a book, DVD or home study course, I will give you all the instructions you need to practice Qigong correctly. But you must remember that Qigong is an Art. Like any Art there is only so much you can learn from a course. To gain mastery of any art (and therefore get all the benefits) you must practice it regularly and practice it correctly. This is so much easier if you learn from a Master or qualified instructor.

The school of Qigong I teach is Shaolin Qigong and the Qigong exercises that form the core of this course are called the Shaolin 18 Lohan Hands.



"Qigong is a path to Total Health"

The Benefits of Practicing Qigong

The five main benefits of practicing Qigong are:

1. **Health and Vitality** - this is perhaps the main reason why people practice Qigong to overcome health problems if you have them, to promote good health once you have it and to increase vitality to enjoy work and play.
2. **Longevity** - want to live a longer, healthier and happier life? Then practice Qigong.
3. **Internal Force** - It's funny now, and I can share this with you as I'm a good decade down the line. It was the pursuit of internal force that led to what has become my life long love of Qigong. As an ignorant martial artist I believed that internal force would allow me hit someone once and make sure they never got back up. This is a shallow understanding of internal force. More importantly, and far more useful, cultivating internal force allows you to keep going all day long with a vigor and vitality that will make your friends ask you what you're on. In a nutshell, think of it as abundant energy.
4. **Mind Expansion** - when you practice high level Qigong you are also practicing Zen or meditation. This helps to improve memory, creativity, intelligence, consciousness and articulate thought. Qigong is brilliant for scholars and students.
5. **Spiritual Cultivation** - I'd like to emphasise that Spiritual does not mean Religious. A person of any religious faith can practice and receive the benefits of Qigong. Qigong is non-religious. By spiritual I mean being in touch with who you really are, the deepest part of you. Everyone has a spiritual life, a spiritual journey. If you are involved with a specific religion then that might be spiritual for you. If you're not religious then anything that gets you in touch with your inner self e.g. quiet time, meditation, listening to music, reading great books, might be spiritual for you. This part of your life can only be defined by you. Our spirituality is so important to our health and well-being, but it's often the most neglected.

Reading this list you'll understand why I consider Qigong to be a path to Total Health.



The Two Magic Words Of Qigong

As you progress through this course, you'll notice that my two favourite words when describing the practice of Shaolin Qigong are RELAXED and GENTLE. I personally consider them to be the 2 most important aspects you must apply to your practice. If you do so you will avoid deviations in your practice and get the results that you want in the quickest time possible.

Please bear this next statement in mind when you practice:

Your movements are relaxed and gentle, your breathing is relaxed and gentle

Your mind is relaxed and any thoughts are gentle

Before reading further, complete this simple exercise:

Put a pen or other small object on the floor. Stand up, now bend down and pick the object up off the floor. Now put it back on the floor again.

This time as you pick the pen up off the floor, I want you to tense every muscle in your body, grit your teeth, grimace your face and maybe even yell. Really use as much effort as you can to pick up the pen.

The point of this exercise? Let us agree that the first time you picked up the pen you used 20 units of energy. Without thinking about it, 20 units of energy are all it took for you to get the job done. The second time you picked up the pen you used considerably more units of energy 60, 80, 100 units? You used up to 80 units more than was necessary to get the same job done.

This is commonly what happens when beginners practice Qigong. If it takes 5 units of energy (or tension) to lift your arms above your head, just use 5 units, no more. More is unnecessary, a waste of energy. Plus energy / Qi finds it difficult to move through tense muscles, so make sure you only use as much tension as necessary to get the job done, and no more!

This situation is even worse if it occurs in your breathing and in your mind. With your Qigong practice always aim to use the minimum amount of energy required for your physical movements, your breathing and your mind. Staying relaxed and being gentle will allow you to achieve this state effortlessly.



The Two Magic Words Of Qigong (continued)

My experience has shown me that beginning students find it difficult to accept that exercising in a relaxed and gentle way can possibly be beneficial to their health and vitality. In the West, for too long, we have been fed the mantra: “No Pain, No Gain”. This has led to the erroneous belief that only if exercise leaves us puffing, panting, sweating and tired, then and only then have we had a worthwhile session.

In Qigong, pain is normally a sign that your practice is wrong in some way. Do not try to be smarter than the past Masters who over 1000's of years have perfected the Art of Qigong and avoid making modifications to the instructions in this course. If you do you will no longer be practicing Shaolin Qigong and you will not get its benefits.

I can't stress this last point enough. Please follow the instructions in this course to the best of your ability. If I ask you to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, then just do that. Don't do what many people do. They think: 'oh, in my Yoga class I breathe in and out through my nose and put the tip of my tongue where the teeth meet the top of the mouth, so I'll do that here as well'.

No, No, NO! Please resist the urge to mix and match any other arts you may have practiced. If you do you're trying to be smarter than the past Masters who over generations have made these arts as simple and as powerful as they can be. Just don't do it and I promise you'll get better results.

Look, I didn't invent or create the material that you have in your hands right now. I learned it directly from a Qigong Master, they learned it directly from their Master, so on and so on - all the way back to the past Masters.

So, just follow the instructions...



Health Techniques Of The Ancient Energy Masters - Butterfly Dancing In Front Of Flowers (Level 1)

Depression is a classic example of closed heart, a dis-ease of the spirit and therefore Butterfly Dancing in Front of Flowers can bring relief. The heart in Chinese Medicine is called the Emperor and when it is open it benefits all of the emotions. So many illness's and dis-eases prevalent in our world today have at their root an emotional cause. Cutting edge and controversial research out of Germany by Dr. Hamer supports the belief that strong emotional shock can manifest years later as serious illness. According to Dr Hamer[1]:

“the real cause of cancer and other diseases is an unexpected traumatic shock for which we are emotionally unprepared.”

There is a saying that "All healing begins with the heart" and Butterfly Dancing in Front of Flowers is a great tool to enhance this healing.

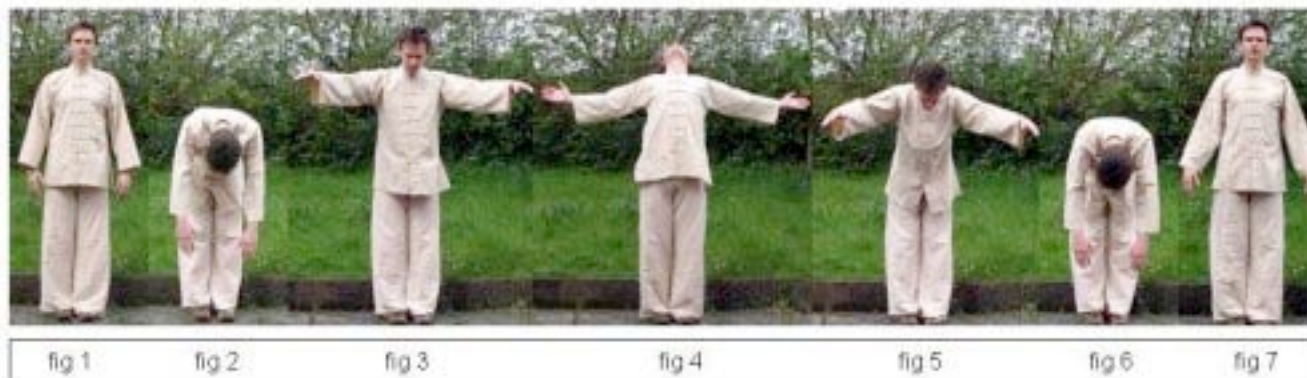
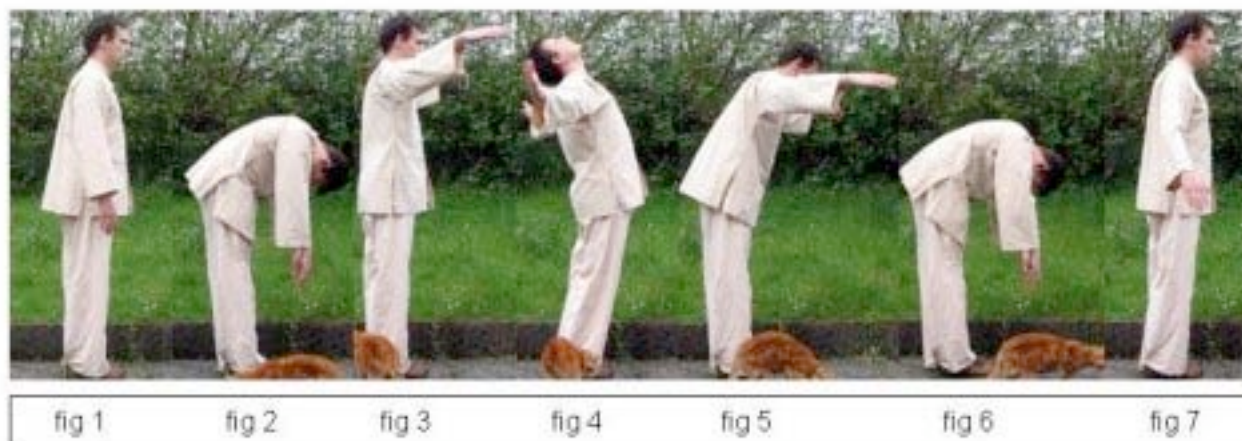
This week we're going to learn it without the breathing (Level 1), as I want you to get very confident at performing the form part of this exercise first. So we're going to be using 'spontaneous breathing', that is when you need to breathe in - just breathe in gently through your nose and when you need to breathe out, just breathe out gently through your mouth.

Next week we'll add the breathing and introduce you to some other skills that will help you to get even better results from this exercise.

Remember to watch the video of Butterfly Dancing as well. This is the real plus that this course has over a book. You can see for yourself how the form is performed.

Here's how to practice it:

References:[1] <http://www.newmedicine.ca/>

Butterfly Dancing In Front Of Flowers (Level 1) -continued**BUTTERFLY DANCING IN FRONT OF FLOWERS – FRONT VIEW****BUTTERFLY DANCING IN FRONT OF FLOWERS – SIDE VIEW**

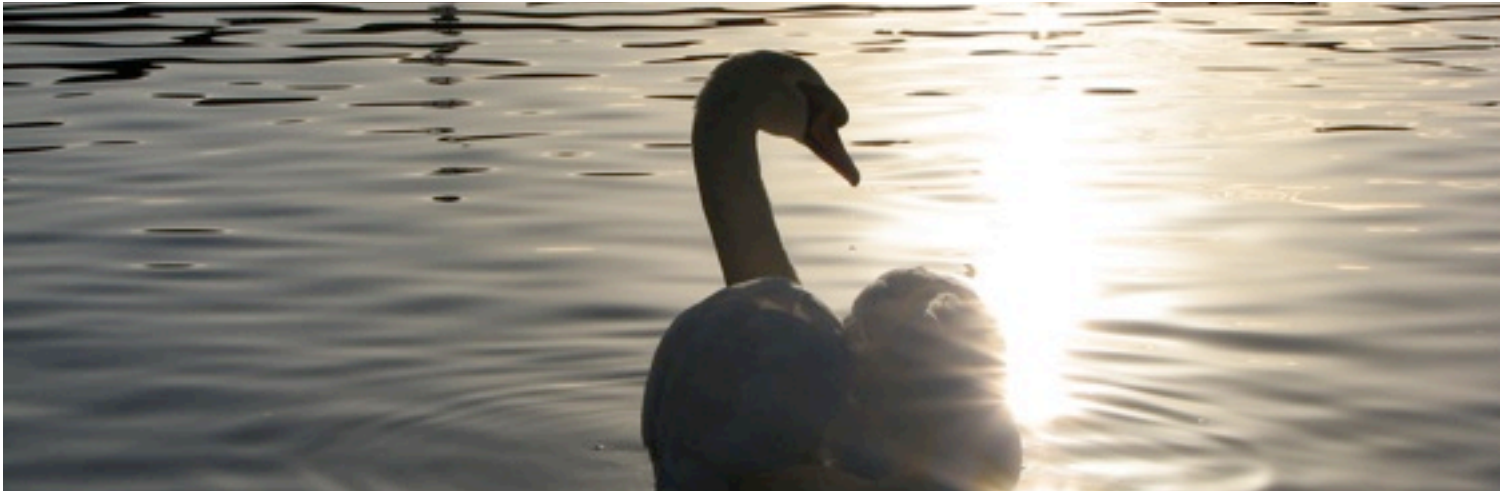
1. Stand in an upright, balanced posture (wuji stance). Relax your body, let go of any emotions and clear your mind of all thoughts (fig 1).
2. Bend forwards, tucking your chin into your chest, arms relaxed, palms about knee level (fig 2).
3. Straighten your body upwards, opening your arms wide (fig 3).
4. Continue bending your upper body backwards, opening your arms as wide as is comfortable and leaning your head backwards (fig 4).
5. Not too fast, not too slow, mindfully begin bending your upper body forwards again (fig 5).
6. Continue moving forwards, lowering your arms and tuck your chin into your chest (fig 6).
7. Repeat steps 4 to 7 for about 10 - 15 repetitions.
8. Let go, do nothing and enjoy your Qi/Energy flow for a few minutes.
9. Gently bring your attention to just below your navel and allow any movements to come to a slow, graceful and gradual stop. Make sure you are standing upright and balanced (wuji stance and fig 7).
10. Stand for a minute or so, mind clear of all thoughts and enjoy the stillness.
11. Gently bring your attention back to the point just below your navel. Rub your hands together vigorously to make sure they are nice and warm and then dab your palms gently against your eyes. Next gently massage your face, head and neck with your hands. When you've finished, walk around briskly to complete the exercise.



Butterfly Dancing In Front Of Flowers (Level 1) -continued

Important Points:

- Always remember to work within your bodies current limitations. Pain and discomfort is a sign you are trying too hard. If you can only lean forwards slightly, or backwards slightly - that's fine for you.
- This pattern is not about touching your toes, you only need to bend forwards enough for your hands to be at about knee level. This is not Nourishing Kidneys you are practicing!
- Enjoy yourself.
- For best results practice Butterfly Dancing once in the morning and once in the evening. Next best is to practice once a day. **Do not practice more than 2 times a day**



Summary Of Lesson One

This lesson we looked at:

What is Qigong?

- Energy Work
- Oldest of the 5 main branches of TCM

Different Levels of Qigong:

- Low - very common, benefits much lower than from traditional Western exercise
- Medium - rare, benefits higher than from traditional Western exercise
- High - very rare, benefits not comparable with Western exercise, impossible to learn from a book or a DVD. Must be learned from a competent instructor or preferably a Qigong master.

Benefits of Practicing Qigong:

- Health & Vitality
- Longevity
- Internal Force
- Mind Expansion
- Spiritual Cultivation

The Two Magic Words of Qigong:

- Relaxed & Gentle

Butterfly Dancing in Front of Flowers - Level One.



Homework

1. Describe what Qigong is in one sentence.
2. What is the difference between high level and low level Qigong?
3. What are the five main reasons people practice Qigong?
4. Which is the correct philosophy of Qigong? "No pain, no gain" or "Relaxed and Gentle".
5. Be able to confidently perform Butterfly Dancing Form for 10 - 15 repetitions.
6. Practice Butterfly Dancing for 5 minutes twice a day (spontaneous breathing at this level).

It's week one so the homework's nice and easy. The most important item here is number 5. Remember there is no need to count the actual number of repetitions. It's when you feel you've done 10 - 15 repetitions that's important. Do not count repetitions - trust me this is a bad habit!

Coming Up Next Week...

An introduction to some of the core principals of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). TCM is the medical philosophy upon which Qigong is based. When you understand these core principals you will better understand how Qigong works and why it is so powerful.

Butterfly Dancing - Level 2, we'll add the breathing and introduce some other skills that will help you to get better results from your practice.

I'll also introduce you to one of the most powerful tools in Qigong that hardly anybody knows about. We'll be using this a lot and you'll be able to see the benefits of your practice for yourself when you use it.

Bye for now...