

Discover Qigong



With Nicole Lee

What is Qigong?



Qigong... pronounced chee-gong

Qigong is a moving meditation practice that comes from ancient China and is connected to Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Qi (chi) translates to mean life-force energy, and Gong to mean work, or cultivate. The literal translation of Qigong being 'energy work'.

The best way to describe the practice of Qigong is as a gentle and restorative exercise therapy. The purpose of the practice is to release tension; physical, mental and emotional tension, in order to allow the energy of the body to circulate freely and without stagnation or blockage.

Qigong activates our body's energy system and the innate self-healing capacity of the body. Ultimately the practice is a moving meditation that incorporates acupressure, slow stretches, gentle flowing movement and stillness.

Where does it come from?

Roots of Qigong

Qigong originates from China and dates back around 4,000 years.

The practice is an exercise therapy that forms part of Traditional Chinese Medicine. It is made up of a series of dynamic and static movements which focus on the combination of three principals: the body, the mind and the breath.



Historically in the practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Qigong was first in the therapeutic order, this is the order in which a doctor or practitioner approaches the treatment of a patient.

Traditional Chinese Medicine is a holistic system of medicine, approached similarly to naturopathy (and other natural medicine modalities). The first order of business being to 'remove the obstacles to cure' - things related to lifestyle such as stress, diet, medications, toxicity and imbalances.

If you were to visit the doctor affected with one of the many lifestyle related illnesses (chronic, autoimmune and inflammation dis-eases) of our modern culture, Qigong would most likely be a major aspect of your healing prescription.

Tai Chi - Qigong

Tai Chi and Qigong are inextricably connected, it is said that Tai Chi is Qigong, however Qigong is not Tai Chi!

Qigong is considered an *internal* practice and Tai Chi considered an external practice of martial arts... often Qigong is contained within Tai Chi but not the other way around.

There are in fact many analogies and jokes about the difference between Qigong and Tai Chi:

Q. What is the difference between Tai Chi and Qigong? A. The spelling!

Trying to separate Tai Chi and Qigong is like trying to separate the colours of a Monet painting....

Traditional Chinese Medicine



In Traditional Chinese Medicine tension is considered to be the cause of all disease... you might think of tension as being a physical affliction, it often is. Tension in this context is considered holistically - i.e. physical, mental, emotional even spiritual. If we hold onto mental and emotional tension, our feelings and thoughts, they create tension as well.

Traditional Chinese Medical theories describe that our personal Constitution, along with our Qi (energy) determines the state of our health. If Qi is flowing freely in a balanced manner throughout the body we have good health, if it becomes blocked, stagnant or imbalanced illness will follow.

Qi (energy) moves throughout our bodies through meridians (energy pathways), these are the channels in which energy flows, the entire meridian system is complex but there are 12 main and 8 extraordinary meridians located throughout the body. They contain a free-flowing, colourless, non-cellular liquid (Qi). These meridians have been measured and mapped by modern technological methods, electronically, thematically, and radio-actively, with practice they can also be felt. These meridians are connected by over 700 energy points, known as acupoints.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine health is considered not just the absence of disease but it is the presence of vitality and wellbeing.

In Western society and increasingly in our modern globalised culture we have come to rely on allopathic medicine and pharmaceutical drugs to treat disease. There are several paramount errors and problems in this approach to healthcare.

Allopathic and pharmaceutical medicine more often than not treats only the symptoms of disease, not the underlying cause(s). This approach to healthcare removes the control a person has over their own health and wellbeing and places it in a pill or some other type of quick fix for the symptoms they are experiencing.

Traditional medicines; Chinese and other forms, focus on empowering individuals to take on self-care and personal responsibility for their health and wellbeing, primarily through their lifestyle and behaviours and secondarily with the assistance of medicinal interventions.

'Health is like water in a well: the importance of the water can never be realised until the well is dry'



How to practice?

Classical / Traditional Qigong

There are literally hundreds, maybe even thousands of different forms of Classical / Traditional Qigong. Classical forms of qigong are generally characterised as a series of precise and differentiated movements performed in a very slow and methodical manner. These forms encompass various elements, such as stretching, balance, strength and body weight bearing movement.



Modern Qigong - for our busy lives

Modern Qigong is a little different to its traditional counterpart but just as powerful, it is an integrative approach to the ancient practice. It brings together movements from the hundreds of traditional forms into a more accessible style that complements our fast paced lifestyles. It allows people to experience the benefits of qigong without the thousands of hours of practice that is often required to master a classical form.

The core of the practice remains, the movements are still precise and differentiated, typically though the practice is performed a little quicker and the format of practice is different. This allows the practice to be undertaken in shorter, more accessible time-frames and blocks, for example a 10 minute self-practice in the morning or a 60 minute in-studio class.

This integrative method brings together movements and postures from various classical forms, those from Classical Qigong and Chinese Health Qigong but also from the hundreds of other traditional styles, as well as Tai Chi and Daoyin.

Modern Qigong explores acupuncture, standing, slow stretches, gentle flowing movements, breath-work and stillness, and accompanied by a strong focus on presence.



Regardless of the method of practice, during Qigong we focus and anchor our attention on the breath, the body and the sensation of Qi; the feeling of aliveness within. We often incorporate other meditative techniques such as mindfulness, intention and visualisation.

When practicing Qigong our intention is to be embodied and present, to connect with ourselves in a holistic way, what is described in Chinese philosophy as connecting The Three Treasures. There are several fundamental principals in the practice of this beautiful form of self-care and restoration, the essence being to slow down, soften the heart and to do less.

Why practice?

Health Benefits

Regular Qigong practice can provide a range of health benefits:

Physical:

- ◆ Increase heart and lung function
- ◆ Positive effect on bone health and density
- ◆ Improve balance and increased strength and flexibility
- ◆ Improve digestion and positively impacts nutritive function
- ◆ Regulate blood pressure
- ◆ Reduce stress through lowering cortisol in the blood - even through short term practice
- ◆ Increase immune function
- ◆ Reduce inflammation and increases wound healing ability
- ◆ Improve the function of the lymphatic system
- ◆ Reduce impacts of sickness

There is also evidence that shows regular qigong practice provides relief of chronic pain associated with osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, back and neck problems.

People report an improvement in quality of life (QOL) and overall wellbeing. Studies indicate that Qigong and Tai Chi hold great potential for improving QOL in both healthy and chronically ill patients.

Mental & emotional benefits:

- ◆ Increase self efficacy and self esteem
- ◆ Increase ability to manage and relieve stress
- ◆ Improve sleep quality
- ◆ Decrease anxiety and improve feelings of depression
- ◆ Improve general measures of mood
- ◆ Improve emotional regulation and resiliency
- ◆ Improve concentration and focus
- ◆ Increase energy, productivity and creativity

Is there an evidence base?

The science

Over the past few decades there have been numerous studies on the practice of Qigong and Tai Chi in relation to a variety of health outcomes. In 2010, Roger Jahnke, a well known Qigong and Tai Chi Master based in the USA collaborated in a review of 77 articles to evaluate the efficacy of the practice in relation to health.

The outcome of this review found that Qigong and Tai Chi practice to have a favourable effect wellbeing and supports the benefits listed on the previous page. Jahnke's study, titled A Comprehensive Review of Health Benefits of Qigong and Tai Chi can be viewed [online here](#).

Other studies:

Studies related to Diabetes, Metabolic Syndrome and Inflammation:

- ◆ *Hypoglycemic and antioxidant effect of Tai chi exercise training in older adults with metabolic syndrome (2018)*
- ◆ *The impact of group-based Tai chi on health-status outcomes among community-dwelling older adults with hypertension (2018)*
- ◆ *Qigong Exercises for the Management of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (2017)*

Studies related to Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome:

- ◆ *A Randomized Trial of Tai Chi for Fibromyalgia (2010)*
- ◆ *A Randomized Controlled Trial of Qigong Exercise on Fatigue Symptoms, Functioning, and Telomerase Activity in Persons with Chronic Fatigue or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (2012)*

Studies related to Cardiovascular Disease:

- ◆ *Tai Chi exercise is more effective than brisk walking in reducing cardiovascular disease risk factors among adults with hypertension: A randomised controlled trial (2018)*
- ◆ *Mind-Body Interventions for Individuals With Heart Failure: A Systematic Review of Randomized Trials (2018)*

Studies related to Neck and Back Pain:

- ◆ *Effects of Qigong practice in office workers with chronic non-specific low back pain: A randomized control trial (2018)*
- ◆ *Effects of Tai Chi on Pain and Muscle Activity in Young Males with Acute Low Back Pain (2014)*
- ◆ *Psychosocial effects of Tai Chi exercise on people with rheumatoid arthritis (2013)*

Studies related to Symptom Management & QOL Care in Cancer Patients:

- ◆ *Effects of Qigong on symptom management in cancer patients: A systematic review (2017)*
- ◆ *Exploratory outcome assessment of Qigong/Tai Chi Easy on breast cancer survivors (2016)*
- ◆ *Meditative qigong relieved symptom severity and interference among patients with breast carcinoma receiving chemotherapy (2015)*
- ◆ *Qigong in cancer care: a systematic review and construct analysis of effective Qigong therapy (2016)*
- ◆ *The efficacy of Guolin-Qigong on the body-mind health of Chinese women with breast cancer: a randomized controlled trial (2017)*

Studies related to Cognitive Function and Memory:

- ◆ *Effect of Qigong exercise on cognitive function, blood pressure and cardiorespiratory fitness in healthy middle-aged subjects (2017)*
- ◆ *Effects of Mind-Body Exercises for Mood and Functional Capabilities in Patients with Stroke: An Analytical Review of Randomized Controlled Trials (2018)*

Studies related to Depression, Anxiety and PTSD:

- ◆ *Tai chi and reduction of depressive symptoms for older adults: A meta-analysis of randomized trials (2012)*
- ◆ *Tai Chi on psychological well-being: systematic review and meta-analysis (2010)*
- ◆ *The Effects of Tai Chi in Centrally Obese Adults with Depression Symptoms (2015)*
- ◆ *The Effects of Tai Chi on Depression, Anxiety, and Psychological Well-Being: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (2014)*

What are the basics and fundamentals of the practice?

Posture

One of the physical health benefits that comes through regular Qigong practice is optimal posture and the gradual correction of postural misalignment. This occurs naturally over a period of time through correcting the position of the body during practice as well as through body awareness and conscious standing and movement.

There are several standing postures utilised in Qigong practice and an entire form of Traditional Qigong dedicated to standing and posture. Standing incorporates the essential elements of qigong, such as posture, relaxation and breath-work, as well as developing body alignment, balance, strength and awareness.

In ancient cultures standing postures were used to induce altered states of consciousness and psychophysiology. It is said that in standing we learn how to move energetic obstructions and achieving a balanced flow of Qi.

Breathing

Many people of the course of their lifetimes have developed abnormal or unusual patterns and habits of breathing. Healthy respiration is an important aspect of wellbeing and there are some amazing health outcomes that can be achieved just through retraining breathing and respiration into a natural pattern that utilises the diaphragm.

There is a ancient Chinese saying... The nose is for breathing... the mouth is for eating!

During the practice of Qigong there are various types of breathing techniques. Most commonly we breathe in and out through the nose, in a natural way. We sometimes utilise other breathing techniques that assist in releasing tension and Qi from the body.

Song

Fear not... we're not about to burst into vocal musicality! Song (pronounced sung) in Chinese refers to relaxation. Its not just relaxation in the English sense of the word, it implies a whole softening, a softness of the heart, a releasing of effort-ing, adopting an awareness and tranquility, sensitivity, warmth and grounded-ness.

Often when we practice Qigong we allow a small smile to come onto the corners of the mouth, directed inwardly at ourselves... we embrace ourselves as if we were a good friend; with kindness, gentleness and unconditional friendly-ness.

Where to now?

I'd love to share Qigong with you... it really is my personal passion and I receive so much inspiration and joy when I see it enhance people's lives. If you feel so called, join me in this odyssey that is Qigong...

Qigong Quickie - online

This is a great way to bring Qigong into your daily life...

This is a 1:1 service that begins with an online date - a 15-20 minute chat about what is going on in your life at the moment and the energetic influences around you.

I'll then curate and deliver to you a video containing 3-5 qigong movements that you can do in under 10 minutes a day. Depending on what is going on for you these might be suggested for use first thing in the morning, before bed or at various other times during your day.

This is a great way to align yourself and get that energetic antenna of yours tuned into the resources you desire. It's a great way to bring movement, mindfulness and meditation into your day. Lets face it, if this was a pill, everyone would take it!!

The investment is \$57, [get yours here](#).

Learn Classical Qigong - online

If you feel like a traditional practice is more your style then you might consider learning the Eight Pieces of Brocade classical form. This form is considered an easy entry into traditional qigong. It has significant positive health benefits including improved respiratory health, cardiovascular function, limb strength, joint flexibility and balance. The practice also helps to strengthen immunity and has positive effects on ageing and mental health.

In the online format the form is learnt through 8 videos, preferably over 8 consecutive weeks (although longer is possible). There is one movement on each video, this is the same format in which you would learn the form in a course environment, in real life. Additionally there will be four (4), 30 minute 1:1 online sessions in which we will meet to review your form, answer questions and work on adjustments.

Investment is \$330, [click here to start today](#).

Start the day right - 1:1 online

Give yourself permission to start your day with flow and book in for a 30 minute Modern Qigong practice with me online... you can also use this session to end your day!

When we start the day feeling overstretched, scattered or frenetic it's difficult to bring ease, spaciousness and clarity to your service... the service you gift to your clients, your colleagues, your family or yourself.

These sessions help to:

- ◆ Relieve overwhelm, stress and tension
- ◆ Improve chronic conditions such as diabetes, fatigue, inflammation,
- ◆ Enhance memory, balance and bone health

Sessions are \$57 for 30 minutes... [book yours here](#).

Chi Space - in studio offerings

My dedicated Qigong studio is located in Balaclava, Melbourne (Australia). If you're from Melbourne, or plan on visiting you may wish to join a public class, course, workshop or other event.

Practicing in-real-life with others is a special experience of shared energy, in Chinese they would describe it as QiChang... the field of energy created and shared within a group of practitioners.

Check out our in-studio offerings here or visit the [website here](#).

Private Sessions & Corporate Services

I can assist with custom and personalised sessions and corporate wellbeing programs to suit your individual needs. Contact me at hello@chispace.com.au to start a conversation.

About me...

Nicole Lee

I am internationally certified in Qigong, trained in both Modern and Classical styles, I am also trained in meditation and mindfulness and hold a Bachelors Degree in Complementary Medicine. I have taught hundreds of Qigong classes, delivered workshops, teacher training programs and corporate events.

I have worked 1:1 with people to help them with various lifestyle related challenges such as anxiety, sleep disorders, recovery from serious illness and fatigue related dis-ease. I know that Qigong can enhance quality of life and help you to live a life filled with more inspiration, ease and joy.



I opened Chi Space in 2018, a studio space dedicated to the teaching and practice of Qigong. I started my Qigong journey in 2013 and have completed the following accreditations:

- Qigong Level 1 Certification - Lee Holden (Holden Qigong)
- Qigong Level 2 Certification - Lee Holden (Holden Qigong)
- Qigong Training - Wang Zhi Peng Tai Chi School
- China Qigong Instructor - Tai Chi Fitness Australia
- Yi Jin Jing - Chinese Health Qigong Association
- Daoyin Yangshen Gong 12 - Chinese Health Qigong Association
- Wellness Coaching Level 1 & 2 - Wellness Coaching Australia
- Mindfulness-based Stillness Meditation - The Gawler Foundation
- Certificate III Fitness - Australian Fitness Academy
- Bachelor in Complementary Medicine - Endeavour College

I am a professional member of the Wushu Tai Chi Qigong (WTCQ) Australia, the Meditation Association of Australia and the International Institute of Complementary Therapists (IICT). I deliver my services in alignment ethical principles and the National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers and I'm dedicated to purposeful work and ongoing personal and professional development.

We all need more spaciousness and clarity in our lives. Feeling aligned, inspired and joyful on a day to day basis is what I aspire to, I believe Qigong is an amazing tool that can help us to transform our energy and channel our personal power.

Much love and Qi... Nicole Lee ✨