



By Shoshanna Katzman

Our physical body naturally nourishes itself through food - a process which begins at birth. As we age, many stressful and traumatic life experiences alter this innate ability. Whether we overeat or not eat enough, without proper amounts of nutritious food, serious illness will likely result - and as with so many health challenges, "Qi is the Key".

Enhancement of Qi flow to restore health through optimal nutrition has been a specialty of Chinese medicine for centuries. This includes Acupuncture, Chinese herbs, Chinese food therapy, Tui Na massage, as well as Qigong and Tai Chi exercise. All of these holistic practices can be used individually or in combination to promote healthy food choices, enhanced digestion, and peak metabolism. Qigong is a favorite form of self-healing because it's easy and quick to learn and suitable for anyone, any age, and any ability.

Characterized by slow, purposeful movement combined with breathing techniques, tapping, vocalization, visualization, and self-acupressure - Qigong cultivates, invigorates, and balances Qi flow as it nourishes mind,

body and spirit. Abundant Qi flow increases quality of both Blood and body fluids leading to peak nutrition throughout the entire body. As with all Chinese medicine modalities, Qi transformation happens via the meridian system, energetic pathways of the body. The Spleen meridian is primary as it promotes transformation and transportation of food and governs water metabolism. Traditionally believed to be "the source of life", Spleen energy contributes to the formation of essence derived from food we eat. This special essence, known as Gu Qi, becomes depleted from a diet lacking essential nutrients in proper amounts.

Based on the traditional Qigong saying "where the mind goes, the Qi follows", Qigong is well known for enhancement of mental and spiritual development. The slow, rhythmical breathing techniques distinctive to Qigong are a powerful digestive aid. The repetitive practice of expanding and contracting the belly with each respiratory cycle in and of itself invigorates digestion, elimination, and metabolism. Accentuating breathing with mind focus on the belly further empowers nutritional healing.

Energizing the Lung meridian helps to release excessive grief and simultaneously heightens respiration, resulting in increased oxygenation of the blood, tissues and cells. Self-healthcare through Qigong is further enhanced via the Kidneys to increase will power, empowering one to say no to unhealthy cravings. Strengthening of Kidney Qi also sparks the energetics of all of the vital organs. Liver energetic balancing resolves anger leading to greater inner acceptance, inner trust, and more peaceful demeanor to provide an optimal internal environment for self-healing. Heart meridian balancing nourishes and pacifies spirit, leading to increased self-awareness, happy Qi and a clear, bright Shen (spirit).

The energetic transformations that happen through dedicated Qigong practice naturally trickle outward to daily life. Through regular practice, a practitioner begins to develop their spiritual awareness, listening carefully to what is eating them inside, and then naturally change what they are eating. This promotes a stronger connection between mind, body and spirit infusing each thought and behavior with clarity and purpose - literally a creative transformation for providing whole being nourishment.

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